ESSAYS IN PHILOSOPHY

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BY

HIRALAL HALDAR, M.A., PH.D.,

LECTURER IN PHILOSOPHY, CALCUTTA UNIVERSITY

UNIVERSITY OF CALCUTTA

1920

PRINTED BY ATULCHANDRA BHATTACHARYYA,
AT THE CALCUTTA UNIVERSITY PRESS, SENATE HOUSE, CALCUTTA

Note

Five of the essays of this collection appeared in the *Philosophical Review* of America, two in the *Modern Review* and one in the Madras *Christian College Magazine.* Three of the articles in the *Philosophical Review* have been mentioned in Baldwin's *Dictionary of Philosophy and Psychology.* The paper on "Green and his critics" was referred to by Professor Pringle-Pattison in one of his essays. He spoke of it as interesting and briefly indicated its main point of view. The article on "Some aspects of Hegel's Philosophy" is referred to in Turner's History of Philosophy and that on the "Conception of the Absolute" in Professor Baillie's article on the Absolute in Hasting's *Encyclopœdia of Religion and Ethics.* The essay on "the Absolute and the finite self" was mentioned and a short summary of it given in the periodical survey of philosophical literature in the *Hibbert Journal*

for October, 1918. This article and that on "Leibniz and German Idealism" contain a fresh treatment and in some respects, further development of the view put forward in my *Hegelianism and Human Personality*. In the latter I have given a somewhat new interpretation of Kant's Conception of the Thing-in-itself.

UNIVERSITY OF CALCUTTA,
September, 1920.

H. H.

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Green and his Critics

(*Published in the Philosophical Review, March, 1894.*)

The Philosophy of Green, like every other great system of thought, must die to live. "Human thought," as Professor Watson says, develops by antagonism. "An edifice of thought which is imposing by its large and bold outlines and which for a time is admired as a flawless product, begins to be regarded as incomplete or defective. The critical movement begins and cannot stop until a higher plane of speculation has been reached." Green's philosophy was accepted, in Oxford at least, without much criticism, during the life-time of its author. But now we find its critics more numerous than its defenders. The time, it seems, has come for the unsparing, and let me say successful, critic of Locke and Hume, Spencer and Lewes, to be himself subjected to close criticism. Even those

who once fought on the same side with him have now gone over to the camp of the enemy. That brilliant and lucid exponent, in bygone days, of what it is the fashion to call Neo-Kantianism or Neo-Hegelianism, Professor Andrew Seth, scarcely writes anything now-a-days without dealing hard blows to his *quondam* allies. The adherents of Absolute Idealism are, perhaps, increasing in number, but Green's way of expounding it commands the assent of very few of them. My object in this paper is not to defend Green, though I should not hesitate to declare that, in principle, I am one of his humble followers. I rather intend to point out some real defects of his system, which, I think, stand to some extent in the way of its being accepted.

Green and the Neo-Hegelians have done a real service to Philosophy by clearly pointing out the difference between Psychology and Theory of Knowledge. Psychology traces the growth of knowledge in the individual mind, but does not investigate the *conditions* of knowledge. Its aim is to explain how knowledge is acquired. When, however, it is shown how the individual mind acquires a knowledge of the objective

world, the further question arises: How is it possible for the subject to know the object? Psychology deals with the *fact*, the theory of knowledge with the *possibility* of the fact. The Psychologist seeks merely to describe the processes and stages through which the human mind comes to have a knowledge of the objective world and of itself. The opposition of subject and object, the possession of a knowledge of the latter by the former, are for him given facts. The epistemologist, on the other hand, seeks to point out the conditions under which the subject acquires a knowledge of the object and to determine the relation between them. *How* is knowledge possible? This is the fundamental question of Epistemology. Kant was the first, in modern times, to answer the question and Green and the Neo-Hegelians have accepted his answer with some important modifications.

It is not necessary to give here a sketch of Green's theory of knowledge. He accepts Kant's doctrine, on the whole, with the elimination of the thing-in-itself. The aim of the Kantian Philosophy, as is well known, is to show that the spatial and temporal world of our knowledge

is the making of our own understanding. Things-in-themselves affect us somehow and produce impressions in our minds. These impressions, however, are a mere manifold, chaotic and incapable of being known. It is the mind that reduces them to order by first arranging them in time and space and then subsuming them under twelve thought-forms or categories of the understanding. All this is done under the guidance of the highest principle of unity, *viz.*, the unity of self-consciousness. The unity of nature, according to Kant, is solely due to the relating activity of our own understanding, which brings the disconnected impressions of sense into relation with each other. The fundamental laws of nature are forms of unity whereby self-consciousness puts together our fleeting sensations and converts them into mutually determining objects of an orderly and coherent world. Kant proves his doctrine in his Transcendental Deduction of the Categories, and, as Professor Seth says, "it is the Transcendental Deduction that has played the most important part in the arguments of the English Kantio-Hegelians."

Now Kant's method of determining the conditions under which experience is possible has, it seems to me, only a negative value. He succeeds in showing that the basal principles of Nature are the categories of our own understanding, but not how the manifold of sense can at all be subsumed under the categories. Kant's argument that experience could not be possible if the raw materials of sense were not determined by the universal forms of thought is irrefragable, but when we come to ask *how* two such dissimilar elements as sense and understanding can combine in order to produce knowledge, we get no satisfactory answer. The cumbrous and uncouth machinery of the Schemata fails to mediate between sense and understanding. If the manifold of sense be really chaotic and devoid of all connection with one another, how can they be reduced to order and rendered intelligible by the understanding? What mysterious power is there in the understanding to transform the dark chaos of sense into the beautiful cosmos of the world of our experience? If such a power exists, how are we to think of its exercise? If it be maintained, that the impressions of

sense have such connections between them as to furnish a clue to the synthetic activity of the understanding, the obvious rejoinder is, what need is there, under the circumstances, for the synthesis of the understanding at all? This insurmountable difficulty of the Kantian theory of knowledge has very ably been brought to light by Dr. Hutchison Stirling, and no Neo-Hegelian, so far as I know, has yet been able to meet his objection. Professor Edward Caird in his *Critical Philosophy of Kant* has tried hard to obviate the difficulty, but I confess I have not been satisfied by his argument. He succeeds in saving the system of Kant from utter collapse at this point only by going far beyond it. The gulf between sense and understanding remains profound, and it does not seem probable that any one will be able to put Dr. Stirling to shame by constructing a bridge over it with the rotten materials supplied by Kant. The truth is that Kant professes to do one thing while he actually does something else. He nowhere shows that the manifold of sense are converted into cognizable objects of experience. What he proves in his principles of the understanding is that the

world of experience implies the presence in it of certain universal forms of connection as its ground principles. To say that fleeting sensations are transformed into the connected objects of a permanent world is one thing. To show that Reason is immanent in the objective world without which a knowledge of it would not be possible is something very different.

Though Green and the Neo-Hegelians have endeavoured to educe a consistent Idealistic theory from the Philosophy of Kant, they have done nothing to show a way out of the difficulty mentioned above. It reappears in their system too, with greater clearness, perhaps. They seem to think that the elimination of the Thing-in-Itself is sufficient to make Kant consistent. We are constantly told that the data of sense must be related to each other by the unity of self-consciousness, if there is to be knowledge. But *how* can the self relate evanescent sensations to each other? Of course the Neo-Hegelians do not admit a distinction between sense and understanding, but they state their theory in language which implies a separation between them. Every reader of Green knows that passage after passage

can be quoted from his writings in which he speaks of *feelings* being converted into felt *things* by the relating activity of the self. But one is utterly at a loss to understand how the self can manufacture felt things out of feelings. Let self-consciousness relate feelings to each other in as many ways as it likes, and still no felt thing will be produced. Feelings will remain feelings to the last, though they may be encumbered with a whole world of relations. Green, indeed, in his *Prolegomena to Ethics*, denies that there is any hard and fast distinction between sense and understanding, but he no sooner proceeds to state his theory than he begins to talk of a world of experience being produced by the relation of feelings to each other. If idealism is to be a tenable theory at all, it must endeavour to show that Reason underlies the objective world, not by imagining the self to direct its relating activity upon a hypothetical manifold of sense, but by demonstrating the fundamental laws of nature to be nothing but thought-forms or categories of the mind. It must exhibit the inter-connexion of these categories and trace them up to the highest

principle, *viz.*, Absolute Self—Consciousness. The only materials with which Green sets to work are a unity of self, a manifold of sense, and certain relations. He nowhere enters upon a full discussion of the nature of these relations. His use of the single word 'relation' would seem to indicate that, according to him, all relations are on the same level. An object—perhaps, to exactly represent Green, we should say a feeling—is related to another object, and the objective world as a whole is related to the unity of self-consciousness. Are both the relations of the same kind and of the same value? The serious mistake of characterising all the categories of thought by the single word 'relation' has been pointed out by Mr. Arthur Eastwood in a recent issue of *Mind*, and I need not, therefore, dwell upon it more at length here.

The fact is that Green and the Neo-Hegelians have been led into various difficulties by following Kant too closely. To speak plainly, they ought to have been more faithful to Hegel, who, in Dr. Stirling's expressive language, "alone of all mankind has succeeded in eating the *historic pabulum* all up out of the vessel of Kant."

Green's method, Professor Seth tells us, "is Kantian. It uses Hegel only as a means of surmounting Kant's subjective presuppositions." It is just in this that the weakness of Green's system consists. Kant's theory, it must never be forgotten, is Epistemology, and Epistemology can never replace Metaphysics proper. Professor Seth thinks that some of the Neo-Hegelians have fallen into the error of making a confusion between Epistemology and Metaphysics. It is so because they have neglected to follow Kantian Epistemology into its legitimate conclusion, *viz.*, Hegelian Ontology. Kant, from his epistemological standpoint, succeeds in showing that the world of experience must necessarily be related to unity of intelligence. To Kant, this unity of intelligence is, no doubt, the subjective ego. But, I think, a Kantian need not be confined within the narrow limits prescribed by his master. Kant himself shows how the regulative conception of a Divine Being is necessary to make our experience a rounded whole. His disciple is entitled to go a little beyond him in order to make his doctrine of the necessary relation of nature to intelligence

complete. Nature, as we know it, cannot exist unless it is related to mind, but this mind cannot be our finite mind, because the finite mind itself has a gradual growth in time and as such requires explanation. If nature is not the creation of any finite mind, and if it cannot be conceived as unrelated to intelligence, it must be regarded as the object of divine thought. But when all this is said, the essential problem of Philosophy remains untouched. Kant's Epistemology only prepares the way to Metaphysics and cannot be a substitute for it.

A careful investigation shows that the ground-principles of Nature are the categories of thought. Philosophy has to inquire how these categories are related to each other. How does the distinction of subject and object arise within thought, and how is it transcended? The categories of thought are universals, but the phenomena of Nature are particulars—how can the former explain the latter? Hegel alone has boldly faced these and other problems and attempted to solve them. He shows that if we begin with the most abstract category, devoid of all content, *viz.*, Pure Being, we are led on and

on by an immanent dialectic till we reach the notion of the Absolute Idea, which contains the antithesis of thought and being—subject and object within itself in solution. Now, according to Hegel, the phenomena of Nature are nothing but the sum-total of the *particularisations* of the categories. This particularisation does not, of course, take place in time. No arbitrary distinction between the universal and the particular is allowable from Hegel's point of view. It is only the requirement of Science that has led Hegel to treat of the categories in the abstract, though particularity is involved in them throughout, just as the physicist speaks of the laws and phenomena of Nature in abstract terms, though all of them are particular. Whether Hegel's philosophy actually solves all the problems raised by thought or not, it at least furnishes a clue to their solution. For him, at least, the difficulty of converting feelings into felt things does not exist. The dialectical method of Hegel is the most valuable of his contributions to philosophy, and it is a pity that Green, under the influence of Lotze, it is supposed, should have regarded Hegel's dialectical

method as the source of his aberrations. In reviewing Dr. John Caird's book, he distinctly says that the dialectical method must be discarded. To discard the dialectical method, however, is to discard Idealism itself. The problem of philosophy at the present time is an exhaustive criticism of the categories, and to this end the assertion, however emphatic, that realities are constituted by relations and relations imply a relating mind, is not sufficient. "The intelligence," says Professor Caird, "when it once begins to define an object for itself, finds itself launched upon a movement of self-asserting synthesis in which it cannot stop till it has recognized that the unity of the object with itself involves its unity with all other objects and with the mind that knows it. Hence, whatever we begin by saying, we must ultimately say 'mind.'" All this must be proved and not merely asserted, and the dialectical method alone is competent to prove it.

In thus vindicating the claims of the Hegelian philosophy to our acceptance, I do not mean to deny that it is necessary to remodel it so as to meet the requirements of the present

time. The categories are not, as some readers of Hegel suppose, the arbitrary inventions of the mind. They are the most fundamental principles of connection between the objects of Nature, and can, therefore, be discovered only after Science has made considerable progress in its interpretation of the world. Now the advance of Science, since Hegel's death, has been wonderful, and could he come to life again he would certainly see the need of making large additions to his categories and of altering their places in his scheme of dialectical development. This is the task to which one who calls himself a Neo-Hegelian must now address himself. We have had enough and to spare of Kantian Epistemology. Let the distinctive problems of philosophy be now attacked. It is a pity that there seems to be no one to do for Hegel what Professor Caird has so ably done for Kant. Let critics say what they may, the philosophy of the future cannot but be a development of Hegelianism in the light of modern science.

Some Aspects of Hegel's Philosophy

(*Philosophical Review, May, 1896.*)

The misfortune of Hegel is that he is more criticised and refuted than understood. There was a time when his system was, even to philosophers of high merit, as impenetrable as a rock of adamant. But yet critics were not wanting who made short work of him, and held him up as an example of the appalling consequences of frequenting the "high *priori* road." Now, however, the circumstances are quite changed. It is generally admitted that knowledge of Hegel is an essential requirement in one who has anything to do with philosophy, whether he agrees with him or not. The difficulties of Hegel have also, to a great extent, been obviated by the labours of competent scholars. "The English student," says Mr. Muirhead, "is no longer debarred by the uncouthness of Hegel's own writings from the study of his ideas. His 'nuggets' have been

broken down by the enthusiastic labours of younger thinkers in our own country, and have now become current coin in every field of speculation."[1] Though this is true, it is by no means sure, if we are to judge from certain recent objections, that some of his main principles have been correctly seized. Indeed, most of the objections seem to be based upon entire misapprehension of his ideas. It is necessary, therefore, especially for those who without being Hegelians in the strict sense of the term, believe that his system must be the foundation of all profitable speculation in the future, to understand exactly the nature of what may be regarded as the hinges on which his philosophy turns. In this paper an humble attempt will be made to throw some light upon certain knotty problems in Hegel's system, with occasional references to recent discussions.

The theory of the identity of Thought and Being is an old difficulty in Hegel, and, notwithstanding the vast mass of expository writing upon it, the critics still shake their heads dubiously. To maintain, it is argued, that

[1] *Elements of Ethics*, 2nd ed., p. 182.

Thought is identical with Being is in itself absurd ; but even if the doctrine be tenable, Hegel has not proved it, but has begun by quietly assuming it. Now the difficulty of perceiving the soundness of Hegel's doctrine arises, I think, from our psychological prepossessions. By ' thought ' we ordinarily mean, either the psychic processes of thinking, or the products of subjective thought. Hegel does not use the term ' thought ' in either of these senses. Nor does he mean by it the epistemological ' unity of self-consciousness.' Whether Hegel was justified in using the term in any other sense may fairly be doubted, but it is of the utmost importance to distinguish clearly the signification which it has in his system from the ordinary meanings of it. Thought, in Hegel's sense, is synonymous with Reason, and Reason is the only ultimate Reality. It is, in short, the Absolute Idea which reconciles with each other, comprehends within itself, and overreaches, all partial existences or " appearances," to use Mr. Bradley's language, and thus *exists* or has *being* in the truest sense of the term. Hegel has supreme contempt for

that which merely exists. To have mere being is as good as to be nothing. What really exists, the only true Being, is the Absolute Idea, Reason or Thought. The highest Being, the absolutely independent Being, it will thus be seen, is Thought. The distinction of subject and object is merely a distinction between two aspects of the Absolute Idea. The universal organism of Thought has the profoundest Being and the only true Being; the ultimate Reality is Thought. This is the proper meaning of Hegel's doctrine of the identity of Thought and Being. It is important to note that, if by 'thought' we mean merely the 'unity of self-consciousness,' it is impossible to say without gross self-contradiction that Thought is identical with Being. The unity of self-consciousness is the correlative of Being, and cannot, therefore, be identical with it. English Neo-Hegelianism, I cannot help thinking, is to some extent responsible for making Hegel's theory seem absurd. The followers of Hegel in England have rendered a great service to true philosophy by showing that all existence must be relative to the self. But, with the exception of Professor

Edward Caird, they have neglected to point out that the correlativity of the self and the world implies a higher and all-inclusive unity. This unity may, as we have seen, be called indifferently Thought or Being.

In reply to the objection that Hegel has rather assumed than proved the ultimate identity of Thought and Being, all that it is necessary to say is that the proof is furnished by the history of modern philosophy. It must never be forgotten that Hegelianism is the logical outcome of Kant's philosophy. If we grasp the central meaning of Kant, we are inevitably driven on to Hegel. It is not, I think, too much to say that Hegel's *Logic* is little more than a systematization of the lessons of Kant's great *Critiques*. Hegel regarded Kant's deduction of the categories as the corner-stone of his philosophy, and with true insight laid his finger upon it as the source of fresh and suggestive ideas. Now the important lesson of that deduction is, that knowledge of an objective world is relative to the synthetic unity of self-consciousness, and the synthetic unity of self-consciousness is itself relative to a known objective world. The manifold

of sense can be brought into relations in space and time only by a combining principle, and such a combining principle is the self. The essence of the self, again, is that it is synthetic, and can exist only through the synthetic work that it performs. The self is a unity *of* plurality, and is as much relative to the plurality of the objective world as that plurality is relative to it. But does not this correlativity imply a higher unity? Unfortunately Kant did not see this implication of his theory. If the self and the world are correlative to each other, evidently there is a higher principle which comprehends and transcends them, and makes their correlativity possible. This higher unity cannot be less than either Thought or Being. It is not Being only, for Being is *one* of the correlatives which it includes within itself. For the same reason it is not Thought only. It is Thought which is Being, Being which is Thought, or, in one word, Thinking Being. This is the conception which Kant's deduction of the categories makes necessary, and with which Hegel starts. This all-inclusive unity, it is needless to say now, is not a barren identity. Let us carefully observe

the path that leads up to it. We begin with the objective world. Under Kant's guidance we see that it is essentially the work of the understanding. We carefully distinguish the universal elements from the mere particulars which are as good as nothing. These universal elements are the categories. The determination of the manifold of sense by the categories presupposes the unity of the self. We are thus led on from the object to the subject. But the subject, the synthetic unity of apperception, as Kant himself points out, presupposes the objective world which it makes possible. The object drives us to the subject and the subject drives us back to the object. But this forward and backward movement is only the circulation of the life-blood of the highest Reality—the final unity, a unity which is neither Thought only, nor Being only, but both at once. But where are we? Are we not already surrounded by the familiar atmosphere of Hegel's *Logic*? It comes to this then, that Hegel travels by the same path by which Kant travelled. Only his terminus is a little beyond Kant's, and he is more wary than his great predecessor, and is careful

to survey minutely every inch of ground that he traverses. Kant gives us a very meagre list of categories. Hegel enriches it by making large and important additions. Kant neglects to show the organic inter-connexion of the categories. Hegel admirably performs the work in his "Objective Logic." Kant shows that the objective world determined by the categories implies the unity of the self. Hegel, in the latter part of the "Doctrine of Essence" demonstrates how the *Begriff* is the central principle of the objective world. Kant points out that the unity of apperception is entirely relative to the objective world. Hegel, in the first part of the "Subjective Logic," shows how the *Begriff* finds its content in the object. Here Kant stops. Hegel, in the remaining part of the "Doctrine of the Notion," demonstrates the essential correlativity of subject and object, and leads them up to the category of categories—the crowning principle of the universe of mind and matter—the Absolute Idea. Is it possible then to accuse Hegel of beginning with a big assumption? Does he not fully prove his theory by completing and systematizing the philosophy of Kant?

But Hegel does not lean upon Kant only. In the *Phenomenology of Spirit* and the introduction to the *Encyclopædia*, he has himself shown the necessity of passing on to the point of view of the identity of Thought and Being. The *Phenomenology* is an introduction to his system, and those who read the *Logic* in the light of it will hardly find any reasonable ground for the accusation that his system is based upon a gratuitous assumption.

The Absolute is an organic unity—an organic unity which comprehends and transcends the universal elements of experience or the categories. But it is not enough to affirm merely the organic inter-connexion of the categories. Such inter-connexion must be fully demonstrated. To do this, is the function of Dialectic. A question, however, may, by the bye, be disposed of at this point. Are the categories subjective or objective? The answer to this follows from what has been already said. If the Absolute is both Thought and Being, if it is a unity that transcends the distinction of subject and object, the constituent elements of it must partake of its own character, that is to say, must be neither

subjective merely nor objective merely, but both at once. But, in order to be strictly correct, it is perhaps better to say that some of the categories are objective, some subjective. We have seen that subject and object are two aspects of the Absolute. Those categories that make up the object—the categories, for example, enumerated by Kant in his *Critique of Pure Reason*, and those that are treated of in Hegel's "Doctrine of Being," "Doctrine of Essence," and the second division of the "Doctrine of the Notion"—are objective categories. Those categories, again, which constitute the subject, those that Hegel examine in the first and third divisions of the "Doctrine of the Notion," are subjective. But, as the object is essentially related to the subject, and the subject is mediated by the consciousness of objects, the objective categories are also subjective, and *vice versâ*.

But what are the categories, and whence do they come? The most general answer that can be given to this question is that the categories are experience described in general terms, and are obtained from Science. They are the ground principles of Nature, the frames in which the

particulars of experience are set. Now it is the work of Science to disengage the universal determining principles from the phenomena with which it deals. Philosophy can undertake the task of systematizing and affiliating to each other the connecting principles of phenomena, or the categories, only after science has discovered them. It has thus to *wait* for the results of Science, and cannot *anticipate* them. Kant's procedure, as is well known, was somewhat different. He, in an artificial way, deduced the twelve categories from the forms of Judgment recognized in Aristotle's *Logic*, and proceeded to show how they are imposed upon the manifold of sense. For Hegel there is no problem of artificially combining the subjective categories with the objective data of sense. Philosophy has not to perform the ambitious and impossible task of explaining the genesis of Nature. Its humble work is to *understand* what *is*, or to perceive the inter-connexion between the component factors of the Supreme Reality—the concrete universal—the Absolute. It, like Science, has nothing to do with mere particulars. The particular *as* particular has no value, nay, not

even existence. Its concern is with the *significance* of the particulars. Philosophy does not undertake the task of finding out the universal principles of Nature. That work is done by the various sciences in their respective fields. It begins its work after the sciences have completed, partially at least, their labors. We thus see how unfounded is the charge that Hegel has evolved the categories out of his inner consciousness, and attempted to construct the universe *a priori*. All along he is face to face with the actually existing Reality. Subjective fancies, optimistic dreams, vain Utopias, are furthest from his mind. Hegel is nothing if not realistic. And yet the charge of neglecting experience and frequenting the "high *priori* road," is constantly brought against him. Hegel is supposed to have done the very thing against which he most strenuously set his face! Such is the irony of fate! Hegel is misunderstood at this point even by those from whom such a misunderstanding would be least expected. We are familiar with Green's remarks on Hegel's dialectic method.[1]

[1] I regret that I have not before me just now Green's *Works*, Vol. III, and cannot, therefore, quote the famous passage in which he

These remarks are based upon the misconception that Hegel interrogates subjective consciousness and not Nature. True philosophy, according to Green, must be founded upon a painstaking analysis of Nature. Exactly so. But in saying this Green merely repeats Hegel's own opinion. Hegel is no admirer of the merely subjective consciousness. He has, rather, great contempt for it Is not subjective idealism one of the things against which he inveighs at every turn ? The fact is that Hegel has not the audacity to override Science, but bases his whole philosophy upon it. It would have been impossible for him to find out the categories, if he had neglected experience.

But Hegel himself is partly to blame, if he has been misunderstood. He is never tired of speaking of the immanent movement of Dialectic, and of disparaging mere external reflection. It sometimes appears as if he believed that we have nothing to do but to hold fast to the category of Pure Being, and the spontaneous movement of Dialectic will lead us on from

speaks of the " one essential aberration of Hegel. " The passage occurs in the review of Dr. John Caird's *Philosophy of Religion.*

category to category till we reach the Absolute Idea. This, however, is not Hegel's meaning. "Hegel," as Professor Andrew Seth truly remarks, "would not have spoken as he does of the 'labour of the Notion,' if he had had nothing to do but to *set* his apparatus at Being and Nothing, and let it unwind itself of its own accord."[1] Dialectic has no power of *discovering* the categories. It only enables us to perceive the organic inter-connexion of the categories,—to realize how every category is meaningless without the others and the Whole of which they are elements. What Hegel calls 'reflection' describes the categories separately, as if they were independent of each other, and brings them into relation to each other in an external and mechanical way. This is, for instance, what Kant did in his *Critique of Pure Reason*. A living organism, however, is more than an aggregate of its component parts; you do not give a proper account of it, if you merely draw up a list of the various limbs and organs of the body, with their descriptions. An adequate conception of a living body is not

[1] *Scottish Philosophy*, 1st ed., p. 194.

possible without an insight into the mutual relations of its various parts and the functions which they discharge in the economy of the whole. Reflection is analytic, or at best, *mechanically* synthetic. Dialectic, on the other hand, is *organically* synthetic. But because Dialectic goes deeper than mere reflection, it does not follow that it is independent of experience. It cannot perform miracles, and has not the power of producing something out of nothing. The categories being *given*, it shows how they grow out of each other, and are phases or aspects of a single Reality. But it cannot generate them. It is nothing more than the comprehensive insight which enables one to see the parts *through* the whole and the whole *through* the parts.

The categories, then, are the connecting links of experience, and the Absolute is the *system* of the categories. But have we not, after all, mere universals, an " unearthly ballet of bloodless categories," than which a single atom is more real and has, therefore, greater worth ? Is not the individual alone real ? The truth is that you cannot separate the universal

from the particular, any more than you can separate the concave from the convex side of an arch. Let me quote here a passage from Lotze which exactly expresses the truth. "The only reality given us, the true reality, includes as an inseparable part of itself this varying flow of phenomena in space and time, this course of Things that happen. This ceaselessly advancing melody of event—it and nothing else—is the metaphysical place in which the connectedness of the world of Ideas, the multiplicity of its harmonious relations, not only is found by us but alone has its reality. Within this reality single products and single occurrences might be legitimately regarded as transitory instances, upon which the world of ideas impressed itself and from which it again withdrew; for before and after and beside them the living idea remained active and present in innumerable other instances, and, while changing its forms, never disappeared from reality. But the whole of reality, the whole of this world, known and unknown together, could not properly be separated from the world of ideas as though it were possible

for the latter to exist and hold good on its own account before realizing itself in the given world, and as though there might have been innumerable equivalent instances—innumerable other worlds besides this—in which the antecedent system of pure Ideas might equally have realized itself."[1] These remarks are probably meant as a reply to Hegel, but they aptly express Hegel's own thought. In his system there is no separation between the universal and the particular. The most general laws of Nature, the categories, are realized in the particular facts of experience. In philosophy, as in science, experience must needs be described in general terms, but it should never be forgotten that general statements always have particular implications. Critics of Hegel do not bear this simple truth in mind, and, consequently, put forward objections which do not in the least affect him.[2] For instance, we are told that the

[1] *Metaphysics* (English translation, edited by Mr. Bosanquet), p. 73.

[2] In an article entitled "The Truth of Empiricism," in the *Philosophical Review*, No. 11, Professor James Seth attributes views to Hegel which are diametrically opposed to Hegel's position as I understand it. Hegel would have cordially accepted Professor Seth's statement of facts. The only question is how they are to be interpreted.

most trivial facts of experience have greater reality than the whole host of categories. Is this criticism? Is it not ridiculous to argue, for example, that a single case of an apple falling to the ground is more real than the general law that bodies attract each other? Hegel is the last person in the world to deny that the mere universal is an empty abstraction. Coming after the age of Empiricism, it was not possible for him to revert to Platonism. What Aristotle was not, he could not be. But at the same time he could not possibly rest in Empiricism. Kant's criticism of Hume, if nothing else, made that impossible. Nor did Hegel seek to combine mechanically the universal with the particular. That attempt was made by Kant, and his signal failure is well known. Hegel's categories are the animating principles of Nature, and have their home there. They are the life-breath of the particular, which without them would have no existence. The individual is what it is (to use Lotze's language in a slightly modified form), only in consequence of the categories, and, conversely, the categories have no other

reality but in the cases of their application. The Real, the Absolute Experience, is a universal which is particular, a particular which is universal; neither the one nor the other alone. To suppose that the real is a mere aggregate of the particular facts of experience, is the mistake of the Naturalist. To suppose that it is somewhere far away from the only world which we know, utterly divorced and different in kind from it, is the mistake of the Universalist or Transcendentalist.

From what has been said above, it is easy to understand Hegel's transition from Logic to Nature. This question has given rise to a good deal of discussion. Schelling, after Hegel's death, sought to demolish his whole system by directing his attack to this point. The fact, however, is that those who believe that there is a transition here from one thing to another are altogether on a wrong track. In fact, the advance from category to category has already ceased in the "Doctrine of the Notion."[1] The

[1] Mr. J. Ellis McTaggart's admirable articles in *Mind*, entitled, I believe, "The Changes of Method in Hegel's Dialectic," contain some valuable remarks on this subject.

"Doctrine of the Notion" only elaborates or develops the results gained in the previous parts of the *Logic*. "The onward movement of the Notion," Hegel himself is careful to point out, "is no longer either a transition into or a reflection on something else, but Development……Transition into something else is the dialectical process within the range of Being: reflection (bringing something else into light) in the range of Essence. The movement of the Notion is *development*: by which that only is explicit which is already implicitly present."[1] In Nature there is nothing more than what there is in Logic. The Phenomena of Nature are nothing more than cases of application of the categories, and the categories live, move, and have their being only in the cases of their application. Nature may, therefore, be regarded as pictorial illustration of the system of categories. There is no transition at all from Logic to Nature. The same Reality which is viewed in its universal aspect in the *Logic* is viewed in its particular aspect in the *Philosophy of Nature*. Here, again, Hegel himself

[1] Wallace's translation of Hegel's *Logic*, 2nd., ed., pp. 288, 289.

has thrown obstacles in the way of a proper interpretation of the relation between the Logical Idea and Nature. His own pet formula has been the source of endless difficulties. We are told that the Logical Idea is the thesis; of which the antithesis is Nature, and the synthesis Spirit. But we must not always interpret Hegel's statements too literally. Here, as everywhere, the letter killeth. As Professor Seth observes, "It is not unnatural for a man to be overridden by an important principle which he has brought to light; and Hegel is not free from this failing."[1]

What has been said above is not, perhaps, sufficient to meet objections. Has not Hegel spoken of the contingency of Nature? Were not the phenomena of Nature found by him too refractory for systematic treatment? Is there not mention of things in the *Philosophy of Nature* to which counterparts are not to be found in *Logic*? How can all this be so, if the *Philosophy of Nature* is only Applied Logic? The answer is that there seems to be more in Nature than in the Logical Idea, because

[1] *Scottish Philosophy*, p. 194.

Hegel's *Logic* is itself imperfect. Hegel has certainly not discovered all the determining principles of Nature. No man can possibly do that. Science is continually bringing fresh categories to light, and it is the business of Logic to systematize them. For this purpose, however, it must humbly *follow* Science. Logic can be complete only if Science becomes complete. But the completeness of Science would mean full knowledge of Nature and the entire preclusion of contingency. Instead of suggesting that there is an irrational element in Nature, Hegel ought to have said that the seeming irrationality of Nature is due to the incompleteness of Logic. If there were irrationality in Nature, Hegel's philosophy would be a baseless structure. The presupposition of that philosophy is that Nature is intelligible to the very core. Hegel was so overridden by the passion for building a complete system that he seems to have labored under the delusion that his categories exhaust the rational significance of Nature. If the different sciences could completely determine the significance of the various groups of phenomena with which they deal, and

if philosophy could fully systematize the materials supplied by them, the world of knowledge would be found to be "a system in which every element, being correlative to the other, at once presupposes and is presupposed by every other," and the existing want of correspondence between the Logical Idea and Nature would disappear. Nature seems to be more than cases of application of the categories, because the Logical Idea itself is not a completed system. If the Logical Idea is not a complete system, if Hegel has not given us a full list of the categories, and if without omniscience the list cannot be completed, how can a *system* of metaphysics be possible at all? I confess I have no satisfactory answer to give. Indeed, it seems to me that this question lays bare the Achilles' heel of Hegelianism, as of all systematic metaphysics. Philosophical synthesis must, for want of a full knowledge of materials, be premature, and premature synthesis is entirely valueless. Suppose I begin to work with four elements, *A*, *B*, *C*, *D*. Philosophical reflection shows that *A* stands to *B* in the relation *x*. With the progress of knowledge new elements, *E*, *F*, *G*, *H*,

become known to me. In the light of these I have to revise my previous systematization. I now find that *A* stands to *B*, not in the old relation *x*, but in a different one, *y*. Such a modification must necessarily take place if the new elements, *E*, *F*, *G*, *H*, are not to be mechanically added to the old ones, but reduce to organic factors of the whole. What was *x* is transformed into *y*. Similarly, *y*, with further discoveries, must be changed into *z* and so on *ad infinitum*. What then, is the value of system-building? If every relation between categories that is determined is liable to modification and alteration, what is the good of taking the trouble to determine such a relation at all? Why should we amuse ourselves with system-building if no complete system—and a *system* must be complete—can be built? It is no answer to say that a relation that is discovered is true so far as is goes, though in the light of fuller knowledge we may perceive a deeper significance of it. The difference between *x* and *y* is not that the latter is more complete than the former; *y* is altogether a new relation, and is at least the contrary of *x*. The relation between

A and *B*, when viewed in connexion with the context, *C*, *D*, E, *F*, *G*, *H*, must necessarily be different from what it is when *C* and *D* are the only elements associated with *A* and *B*. Does it not follow, then, that the attempt to affiliate one category to another is only to entangle ourselves in the cobwebs of imagination? This question makes me pause, and, until I can answer it satisfactorily, I am neither an Hegelian nor a firm believer in metaphysics. That the component elements of the universe are organically connected with each other because it is a systematic whole, is a rational conviction which obtrudes itself upon us; but the exact form and order of the connexion is perhaps beyond the reach of human intellect. The difficulty of the situation is this. The study of the history of philosophy drives the student on to Hegel's point of view. He cannot easily see how to avoid his conclusions, and yet he shrinks back from his method as from a dazzling light. But without method Hegelianism is nothing. Perhaps the only possible method is that which Mr. Bradley has adopted in his *Appearance and Reality*. All that we can do, perhaps, is to

show that partial knowledge is mere appearance, and demands an All-comprehensive Unity to systematize and give meaning to it; and then to defend the conception of the Absolute against possible objections. Nothing short of omniscience can enable us to determine exactly the relations in which the elements of the Whole stand to each other.

I shall conclude with the consideration of one more point. Is it true, as is alleged, that Hegel has ignored Will altogether and made Thought all in all? The term Will, like Thought, has probably misled many. If by Will is meant 'sense of effort,' certainly Hegel has ignored it, for the simple reason that it is irrelevant in metaphysics, and has no place outside psychophysics. But if Thought, as Dialectic proves, is essentially dynamic, it, in so far as it is dynamic, is Will. Hegel's Absolute is *energizing* Reason, and is therefore both Thought and Will. If there is no recognition of Will in Hegel's system, what is the significance of such categories as Attraction and Repulsion, Force and its Expression? It cannot be said that the thought of Attraction and Repulsion is very different

from actual Attraction and Repulsion. We have already seen that Thought is not different from Being. Attraction and Repulsion, Force and its Expression, are only the modes in which the Absolute realizes itself; and, if these do not constitute Will, it is difficult to say what does. The Absolute Idea is the synthesis of the True and the Good, and, if the True is Thought, is not the Good, Will? The truth is that Thought divorced from Will is a mere abstraction. The Absolute is *actice* Reason. Is it not blissful, too? If we are justified in thinking that happiness is the incident of harmony, what can be more happy than the Absolute? It overcomes all finitude and discord. Pains and imperfections in the part only contribute to its harmony. Mr. Bradley is not, after all, wrong in maintaining that in the Absolute there is a balance of pleasure over pain. This opinion is not in any way inconsistent with Hegelianism, though, of course, Hegel has not expressly said anything on the subject. But I think it is a necessary corollary of Hegel's theory. If the Absolute is an harmonious Whole how can it be other than blissful? If a conjecture were to be hazarded,

at the risk of lapsing into mysticism, might it not be said that the beatitude of the Absolute is of the aesthetic type? The True, the Good, the Beautiful—this must ever remain the fittest description of the Absolute, or, in the words of the ancient philosophers of India, *Satyam*, *Sivam*, *Sundaram*.

The Conception of the Absolute

(*Philosophical Review, May 1899.*)

Absolute Idealism, whatever may be its merits or demerits, is one of the recognized modes of thinking in the civilized world at the present day. The way of thinking which it represents moves "at present in one form or another side by side with the advancing spread of Spencerian thought, and appears more and more as the reliance of those who would vindicate an eternal person against the hostile theory of agnosticism." (*The Conception of God*, p. xxviii.) The presentations of the theory have been so numerous that there is hardly any real call for adding one more to the list. On the other hand, it seems very necessary to pause for a while, in order to enter fully into the significance of the conception of the Absolute. It is indeed true that in philosophy the method is at least as important as the conclusion. But the chief *interest* not only of the

"general reader," but of philosophers also, centers in the conclusion. The methods of different thinkers are, after all, only ways of approach, more or less determined by subjective predilections, to the common goal, *viz.*, truth. I propose, therefore, in this paper, to inquire what the conception of the Absolute is, or rather must be, and do not intend to ask how it is reached. It has all along been the boast of absolute idealism that it is not only consistent with, but is the only theory which can supply a foundation to, ordinary experience and science. All that we have to do, then, is to take this boast seriously and to ask how, if it is to be made good, the Absolute must be conceived. A conception of the Absolute which is violently opposed to the conclusions of science and the sober common sense of practical men must, at once, be rejected as such, however plausible and apparently unanswerable may be the arguments urged in its behalf. A theory that is not congruous with well-verified facts is worse than an idle dream. Of course, it cannot be affirmed that a philosophical theory is to accept uncritically brute facts and bring

itself into line with them. It does not fulfil its function, unless it interprets them and assigns to them their proper places with reference to each other in the totality of a system. But in explaining facts, we must be careful not to explain them away. This is the caution which all theorists ought constantly to bear in mind.

It is not necessary to dwell long upon the proposition that "the Absolute is thought." If there is any one theme which has received elaborate treatment at the hands of thinkers belonging to the idealistic school, it is that the essential nature of the Absolute is thought. Indeed, so much has this been the case that, at the present day, the reproach is constantly levelled against absolute idealism that by conceiving of the Absolute as mere thought, it only hypostatizes an abstraction. Perhaps in reaction against the prevailing sensationalism this was inevitable in England. But so great a stress has been laid upon the conception of the Absolute as thought, that, in consequence of it, the scope and significance of even Hegel's Logic, the source of almost all recent idealistic

theories, has been misunderstood. We have been in danger of forgetting that the categories, and the Absolute as the system of them, are the merest abstractions unless they are realized in particular items of experience. If the sensationalists are wrong in conceiving of knowledge as constituted by brute facts of experience alone, the idealists are equally wrong in making abstract thought all in all. Mr. Bradley's *Appearance and Reality* was published in the nick of time, and became a potent corrective of the somewhat one-sided manner in which absolute idealism has until lately been interpreted. The Absolute is thought as well as experience. So much is involved in Kant's suggestive conception of an intuitive understanding. Professor Josiah Royce, in his latest and maturest exposition of absolute idealism, expressly defines the Absolute as both thought and experience. Of course, it is possible to give a very wide meaning to the term "thought" and make it inclusive of what we understand by 'experience.' I have myself no doubt that this is what has been done by the followers of Hegel who are accustomed to speak of the

Absolute as thought or reason. But Professor Royce has done well to disarm critics by explicitly setting forth the true meaning of the statement that the Absolute is thought. "There is," says he, "an absolute experience, for which the conception of an absolute reality, *i.e.*, the conception of a system of ideal truth, is fulfilled by the very contents that get presented to this experience... For the absolute experience, as for ours, there are data, contents, facts. But these data, these contents, express, for the absolute experience, its own meaning, its thought, its ideas." (*The Conception of God*, pp. 43-44.) The much-misunderstood philosophy of Hegel is very explicit in affirming the Absolute to be both thought and experience. Hegel never loses sight of Kant's intuitive understanding. If you judge him by his Logic alone, he is, to be sure, guilty of the most mischievous error into which a philosopher has ever fallen. But has he not told us in metaphorical language that Logic moves in the realm of abstractions, and exhibits, to us the nature of God as He is in Himself before creation? Avoiding metaphor, the plain meaning is that

Logic shows us what God is as thought. Thought, however, involves experience, and this Hegel affirms more than once. Take section 244 of the *Encyclopaedia*, for instance. A careful perusal of it reveals unmistakably his meaning, and removes the so-called mystery of the transition from Logic to Nature. "The idea which is independent or for itself, when viewed on the point of its unity with itself, is perception, or intuition, and the idea to be perceived is Nature. But as intuition, the idea is invested with the one-sided characteristic of immediacy, or of negation, by means of an external reflection. But the idea is absolutely free; and its freedom means that it does not merely pass over into life or as finite cognition allow life to show in it, but in its own true absolute truth resolves to let the element of its particularity or of the first characterization and 'other-being,' the immediate idea, as its reflection, go forth freely itself from itself as Nature." (Wallace's Translation of Hegel's *Logic*, 1st ed., p. 328.) So let there be no misunderstanding in future as to the meaning of the proposition, the Absolute is thought. In

holding fast to it, idealism does not and cannot ignore concrete experience.

The question of far greater importance at the present juncture, is that of the relation of the will to the Absolute. Professor Royce is the only defender of absolute idealism who has even raised it. But his treatment of it, however striking and instructive, does not, it seems to me, adequately solve the problem. What he does is to identify will, in its essential features, with attention, and to attribute it to the Absolute ; because attention, as he argues, is the " sacrifice of ideal possibilities for the sake of realizing ideas." " It is losing to win—losing bare abstractions to find concrete life. The Divine Will is simply that aspect of the Absolute which is expressed in the concrete and differentiated individuality of the world." It is difficult to understand why attention alone should be regarded as the type of will. Even in this way there is no chance of getting rid of " the psychological accidents of our volitional experience." Psychology tells us that we cannot conceive of attention as utterly divorced from muscular and skin sensations.

Desire, choice, and efficacious effort are certainly inseparable from will, and are as much involved in attention as in bodily activity. Professor Royce maintains that these three aspects of "what is popularly regarded as volition come to us, primarily, as facts of human experience colored through and through by the special conditions of our human mental life." If this be the ground of denying will, *as we know* it, to the Absolute, why, for exactly the same reason, you cannot predicate experience of it. If it be a valid objection to say that the Absolute cannot have anything like the will which we find in human beings, because it has no muscles, we can argue in the very same strain that it has no experience, because it has not eyes to see, ears to hear, skin to touch, and so on. To be sure, it is ridiculous to regard the Absolute as putting forth effort or meeting with resistance ; but this is so, not because it does not possess experiences of this sort but because they, belonging to us in a fragmentary and one-sided manner, as the incident of our finitude, are merged in its higher consciousness, of which, perhaps, we have no adequate conception. If

the Absolute in me is resisted by the wall, it, *in the wall*, offers resistance, and in the whole all finite experiences of acting and of being acted upon are merged in a richer experience. After all I do not see how Professor Royce himself can avoid this conclusion. Let us ignore 'inanimate' nature, for the sake of argument. Now the myriads of living beings on earth have all muscular feelings, and the absolute experience, on Professor Royce's own showing, is inclusive of them. Muscular and skin sensations, therefore, *do* belong to the Absolute; only it overcomes and transcends them. My own thesis does not imply anything more than this. The absolute experience includes my finite experience, and contains within itself the feelings that I have, toothache, the delight of a Turkish bath, and all. How can the case be different with such sensations and feelings as are involved in will? If any one is disposed to smile at a thought like this, I only ask him to state his own notion of the operations of God's will in the universe in *intelligible* terms, instead of taking shelter under a string of meaningless phrases. An essential ingredient of will is the

consciousness of effort and of being resisted, and I do not, therefore, see how it is possible to follow Professor Royce in attenuating it to mere attention. Besides, there is a more formidable objection to the adoption of this course. Science tells us that the universe is the manifestation of what it calls 'force' or 'energy.' How is this doctrine, I ask, to be reconciled with absolute idealism? At the outset of this paper, it has been pointed out that idealism, if it is not to stultify itself, must be consistent with common sense and science. Does Professor Royce's theory conform to this canon? It is perfectly certain that scientific men will decidedly say 'no,' if you tell them that what they call 'force' is at best only attention. You cannot demand an alternative theory from them. Their business is to state facts, and not to propound theories. It is for the philosopher to theorize, and if his speculations do not harmonize with facts, so much the worse for the speculations. The facts cannot disappear because your theory does not accommodate itself to them. For my part, I see no escape from Professor Ladd's thesis that "if the empty term 'energy' or 'force' be displaced by

a word which has a meaning representable in some concrete, actual experience, such word is found to signify our immediate knowledge of ourselves as wills."—(*Philosophy of Knowledge*, p. 223.) Professor Ladd truly remarks that "the hidden qualities and forces with which we endow things—especially the possession of 'force' in general, or of some 'mode of energy'—are conceptions abstracted from our experience as self-active in relation to the objects of our cognition." Attention, I submit, can never be regarded as the only proper form of will. At its highest, will consists of attention, consciousness of effort, desire, purposive choice, and adaptation of means to ends. At its lowest, it cannot be without the sense of effort. In short, we cannot understand what will is, if we eliminate from it the feeling of effort. To the Absolute, then, we must attribute such feeling, *so far as the particular modes of its manifestation are concerned.*

In the totality of its life, the feeling of resistance and effort, experienced in the parts, are submerged, and transformed into a higher kind of active consciousness, which is an

inseparable aspect of the Absolute. Absolute personality, or rather *super*-personality (see below), is also absolute will, and includes within itself feelings of effort and resistance, which are the component factors, though not the whole, of will. Such a conception may have its difficulties, and may even seem mythological, but only in this way, I venture to assert, can absolute idealism reconcile itself with facts so dear to scientific men. Systems of cosmic theism, like those of Mr. Fiske and Professor Le Conte, are directly based upon well-ascertained truths of science. Why should absolute idealism alone be so shy of them?

It is not necessary to enter upon a long discussion of the relation of feeling to the Absolute. Feeling, we learn from psychology, cannot be separated from will, and if the universe must be viewed as the manifestation of the Divine will, feeling cannot but be regarded as an essential ingredient in the life of the Absolute. Pleasure is the concomitant of harmony, and pain that of discord. But the strifes and jolts of the parts are lulled and harmonized in the Absolute, and the feeling which the

Absolute experiences must, therefore, be one of pleasure that drowns all forms of pain. The *Vedanta* philosophy of India truly speaks of the Absolute as *Anandam* or blissful. Mr. Bradley's great work marks a new era in philosophical speculations in conceiving of the Absolute as possessed of a balance of pleasure over pain.

The Absolute is an "eternally complete consciousness." Any lesser definition of it is self-contradictory, and raises anew all the difficulties for overcoming which the conception is framed. But there is the stubborn fact of time. How is the reality of time to be reconciled with the completeness of the Absolute? Professor Royce truly observes that "theory demands that the eternal world should be a finished whole." But "the 'eternal now,'" as he is careful to point out, "is simply not the temporal present." The 'eternal now,' in short, is inclusive of past, present, and future in which they are all held in solution. But, alas! such a notion, instead of lessening our difficulties, only increases them. Is there not a real difference between past, present, and future? If so, what becomes of it if you conceive of the 'eternal now' as inclusive

of them all? Perhaps a satisfactory solution of the problem is beyond us. All that can be attempted is to offer some suggestions towards a partial clearing up of the mystery. The Absolute, without doubt, knows past and future as much as the present. So much is conceded by ordinary understanding when it believes God to be Omniscient. But, to speak the truth, our robust common sense revolts against idealism, be it absolute or not, when we are told that though Julius Cæsar is dead, he is alive at the present moment and is conquering Spain, Gaul, Greece and Egypt. "Babylon and Tyre seem unreal to us, but *those* cities are real, and the throb of life pulses through the veins of their citizens, even now, just as truly and strongly as it does through yours." How does the reader appreciate a statement like this? Unquestionably, there is an element of truth in it, but we must take care to ascertain the exact measure of it. We cannot help thinking that even in the consciousness of the Absolute, there is, in some shape or other, a real difference between past, present, and future, though they are all together in the vision of the 'eternal now.' We do not

deny that the gulf-stream really moves forward, albeit there is no progressive movement in the total volume of water on earth. The knowledge of past and future which the Absolute has is not conceptual, as the case is with us. Nor is it merely perceptual. It is a union of both, which as we have seen before, is the type of the Absolute consciousness. The criterion of difference, besides that furnished by succession, between past, present, and future seems to lie in the manifestations of will, such as we have seen it really to be, involved in the present, while the representation of past and future implies attention only. One of my objections to Professor Royce's theory of the will, therefore, is that it takes away all means of drawing a *real* distinction, between past and present in the experience of the Absolute. Of course, if you deny any such distinction, there is an end of the matter. But, I confess, I do not see how the denial can be made good. All things, past, present, and future, are put together in the 'eternal now' of the Absolute, but this does not cancel the real succession of time. If we do not fully understand how the eternal completeness of

the Divine consciousness is reconcilable with the actual flow of time, we no more comprehend how in it the flow can be stopped. Professor Royce is explicit in declaring: "From the absolute point of view, there is real change and in only one direction, in time; in brief, all temporal items and significances remain what they are, even while, as included in the completer whole, they are viewed as forming a part of the content of the Eternal Instant." (*The Conception of God*, p. 348.) But Professor Royce does not say by what sign the present is to be distinguished from past or future in the eternal instant. This sign, I maintain, is that while the present contains actual expression of force, or, from our point of view, manifestations of the Absolute Will involving but transcending experiences of resistance and effort, the past and future are only intuited and presuppose attention alone. Unless you make a real distinction between past and present other than that which depends on succession, succession itself loses all its meaning. Major Marchand's occupation of Fashoda is followed by Lord Salisbury's protest against it, and this by Major Marchand's recall.

But if you do not discover some means of drawing a real distinction between what is over and what is going on, you are at once driven to the absurdity of saying that in the knowledge of the Absolute, Major Marchand is as actually occupying Fashoda, as he is leaving it.

Important as is the question of the relation of the Absolute to time process, the fiercest battle of idealism has been fought over the problem of individuality. Almost all the assailants of absolute idealism have regarded its solution of this problem as its most vulnerable point, and have accordingly directed their main attack to it. In the volume entitled the *Conception of God*, which contains the latest and, in many respects, the freshest discussion on absolute idealism, Professor Howison joins issue with Professor Royce on the question of individuality, and declares that a theory like that advocated by Professor Royce is not absolute idealism at all, because "its exact fault is, not waiting for thought to take the fruitful roundness of its entire ideal, before declaring its equivalence to the real." A theory according to him, is not tenable, unless it provides for "a plurality of

such strictly free minds as cannot be contained in the unity of any single consciousness." Now, as has been already pointed out, there can be no doubt that a theory which cannot account for facts indubitably clear to common sense stands self-condemned. But common sense does not demand a *theory*. Its simple requirement is satisfied, if in the process of explanation, facts are not frittered away. In saying that we must "attain to the distinct reality, the full *otherhood* of the creation, and to the *moral* reality of the creature, which means his self-determining freedom not merely with reference to the world of sense, but also with reference to the creator," Professor Howison does not state *facts*, but propounds a *theory*. Neither common sense nor moral and religious sense has the right to dictate terms to philosophy. Philosophy is bound to satisfy the legitimate demands of common sense, though the demands may be so set forth as to make it impossible for any consistent theory to meet them. Absolute idealism has never ignored the claims of the individual. On the contrary, Hegel expressly attributes the superiority of his system over that of Spinoza to the fact

that his Absolute is not like the lion's den, but gives full freedom and reality to the individual. The freedom of the individual, however, is not different from, but is a part of, the freedom of the Absolute. As Professor Royce finely puts it, "the individual experience is identically a part of God's experience, *i.e.*, not similar to a portion of God's experience, but identically the same as such portion." Again, "the individual is free with the same freedom as is God's freedom only that the individual's freedom is not the whole of God's freedom, but is an unique part thereof. (*The Conception of God*, pp. 98-99.)

Now I submit that this fully satisfies all that common sense can reasonably demand. An objection which Professor Howison urges against absolute idealism seems to me to strikingly demonstrate the freedom of the finite individual. He maintains that the reasoning on which absolute idealism is made to stand has a tendency to lead to solipsism. "If there is but one and the same final self for us each and all, then, with a literalness indeed appalling, He is We, and We are He; nay He is I and I am He!" "The

finite self and the infinite self are but two names at the opposite poles of one lonely reality, which from its isolation is without possible moral significance." (*The Conception of God*, p. 99.) To be sure, the finite self and the infinite self are but two names at the *opposite* poles of one reality, but I do not admit that such a reality is lonely. He is I, most assuredly; but, be it remembered, He is also We. Far from a thought like this leading to solipsism, it is exactly what makes the city of God, whose reality Professor Howison is so nobly anxious to keep intact, stand upon the surest and most abiding foundation. However that may be, what I wish to point out here is this: In so far as I am He, I enjoy freedom even as God Almighty Himself enjoys it. What more can we expect? We are not one whit less free than God is. Surely this ought to satisfy the most ardent champion of individuality and free will. Professor Howison, however, stands up for a doctrine which I know not how to conceive. He believes in "the mutually transcendent and still thoroughly knowable reality of God and soul." It is difficult to conceive how realities can be mutually transcendent and

yet knowable. For my part, I find that whenever I try to think of a plurality of mutually exclusive things I put *myself* behind them, and conceive of them as a plurality only by bringing them together in my consciousness. Frightened by the bogey of pantheism you stoutly resist the doctrine that the plurality of individuals is contained in the unity of a single Absolute consciousness, but you end by putting *yourself* in the place which the Absolute consciousness, is made to vacate. If the prerogative of the Absolute consciousness had not been challenged, you might have said that you conceive of plurality by putting individuals together in it, and that you also participate in this consciousness. But now that you demolish absolute idealism you are bound to make your lonely self the synthetic principle, if the possibility of knowing, as well as of being, is at all to remain. Surely *this* is solipsism with a vengeance. The fact is that the Absolute comprehends within itself all finite individuals, and imparts to them its own being and freedom. Any other supposition is simply inconceivable and absurd. If the reality of the individuals depends upon that of the

Absolute, the Absolute, on its part, has being only by differentiating itself into the individuals which the totality of its life includes. As Hegel says: "If God be the abstract supersensible essence or Being which is void of all difference and all specific character, He is only a bare name and a mere *caput mortuum* of the abstract understanding."

Can personality be predicated of the Absolute? After what has been already said, the answer to this question ought not to be doubtful. One thing is certain. The absolute cannot be less than personal. But personality is essentially a finite category. It implies a plurality of beings possessed of rights and acknowledging duties to each other. We cannot conceive of the Absolute as such a being. Then we have to remember that the Absolute consciousness is an all-embracing, all-reconciling unity, which perceives all things *in* space and time and yet transcends them, which includes as component factors of itself all the conflicting items of experience that we have and yet harmonizes them in a perfect synthesis of which we have only an exceedingly obscure knowledge. Is it not misuse of language

to call such a reality personal? You may if you please, characterize it as super-personal, but personality is a category too poor to fathom its depth. On this question, as on many others, Professor Royce is unable to side with Mr. Bradley and declares himself in favour of the personality of the Absolute. But his own view of the nature of the Absolute does not, I think, lend support to his thesis. "All these names," says he, "'Absolute Self,' 'Absolute Thought,' 'Absolute Experience,' are not, indeed, mere different names for the inexpressible truth; but, when carefully defined through the very process of their construction, they are equally valuable expressions of different aspects of the same truth. *God is known as Thought fulfilled, as experience absolutely organized, so as to have one ideal unity of meaning; as Truth transparent to itself; as life in absolute harmony with idea, as self-hood eternally obtained. And all this the Absolute is in concrete unity, not in mere variety.*" (*The conception of God*, pp. 45-46.) Is what we understand by 'person' anything like this? If not, it is impossible to attribute personality to the Absolute. There is no *person* whom we know, or have ever heard

of, in whose experience ideas are completely harmonized with facts. A perceptive understanding, to be sure, is more than a person.

In conclusion, I think it desirable to allude very briefly to the question, whether absolute idealism can justly be described as gnosticism, with which it is so often identified. If it is gnosticism to boldly maintain that the supreme Reality is an all-unifying spiritual principle, absolute idealism has, unquestionably, no difference with it. But this idealism disclaims all knowledge of the details of the life of the Absolute. All that it aspires to do is to sketch the merest outlines of it. No philosopher can ever hope to explain how the Absolute transcends space and time without nullifying them, gathers up into itself all finite selves without in the slightest degree, abrogating their individuality, and brings perception and conception into perfect accord with each other. We cannot but believe that the ultimate truth is such. But we walk more by faith than by sight. There is, therefore, ample room for faith within the limits of absolute idealism; only it does not breathe defiance to reason, but walks along the path which reason indicates.

Leibniz and German Idealism

(*Philosophical Review*, *July 1917*)

It is universally acknowledged that Leibniz is the founder of German philosophy, but what is not seen, at any rate with equal clearness, is that the central conceptions of Leibniz dominate the great idealistic systems of Germany from Kant downwards. Leibniz's way of conceiving of the ultimate reality is, in essence, also that of Kant, Hegel and Lotze. To say this is not of course to maintain that the Leibnizian doctrines have been reproduced without change by his successors, but I think it is not difficult to show that if we go beneath the surface we shall find that the ideas which Leibniz introduced into modern philosophy and for which he was largely indebted to Plato have, to a considerable extent, been the determining influence of subsequent speculations. Leibniz's philosophical descendants have not rejected but retained and developed his leading thoughts. In order to show this it is

necessary to begin with a brief summary of the main views of Leibniz.

The units of which the world-system is composed are the monads or spiritual principles, and each of these principles in spite of its limitations—which, however, are not external but intrinsic to it—is a complete whole and, therefore, ideates the *whole* world from its special point of view. These monads are regarded by Leibniz as absolutely cut off from and in no way influencing each other, but he is not able to retain this view to the end; and though it is not explicitly rejected, it must be regarded as virtually abandoned if we are to put any consistent meaning into his theory of the relation of God to the monads. God is the cause of the preëstablished harmony, which accounts for the correspondence between the ideas of the monads and the actual order of the world. The ideas of the monads are not merely internal modifications of them but are relative to the objective order; but as the view that the monads are independent of each other is fatal to the correlativity of the ideation of the monads and the world order, and as without such correlativity the world

would not be a rational order but a perfect chaos, Leibniz is forced to conceive of the world as related to God as an army, to use a simile of Aristotle's, is related to its general. The monads then which alone count are those that are in preëstablished harmony with and *not* in isolation from each other. This view is further enforced and developed when the distinction is made between the possible and the compossible and we are told that those monads alone are real, as distinguished from those which are merely possible, which coexist with each other as component elements of the world in which the purpose of God is realized. And, finally, even the semblance of the isolated independence of the monads is taken away when they are conceived as emanations from God. It appears then that whatever may have been the starting point of Leibniz, his final view of the world is that it is an orderly whole of interrelated reals, which are monads possessing ideas of different degrees of clearness, all comprised within the being of God who, if He transcends them, is also immanent in them and of whose mind they are the embodiment or expression.

Now the theory sketched above represents, in substance, the final form which Kant's conception of the 'thing-in-itself' assumes in the Dialectic. It is a great mistake to suppose that the Dialectic is mainly negative in its results. With the destructive criticism is intermingled a positive view of the *mundus intelligibilis* whcih Kant inherited from Leibniz and which he always had in mind. This view is, no doubt, put forward tentatively and more as a private conviction of the philosopher than as a theory capable of demonstration, but it had a great hold on Kant's mind. Paulsen rightly observes that Kant's metaphysics "maintains its position alongside of the official system, but it has the value only of a private opinion of Kant's with which he did not care to dispense. But one must then add that this private opinion was older than the epistemological system, and it was so deeply rooted in his thought that he would sooner have given up the Analytic than the *mundus intelligibilis*." [1]

The earliest statement of Kant about the 'things-in-themselves' is that they are the

1. *Immanuel Kant: His Life and Doctrine*, English tr., p. 247.

unknown objects which affect our sensibility and produce the impressions which are the raw material of knowledge. This doctrine does not substantially differ from the crude realistic view of matter as the substratum of the qualities of things, and is utterly inconsistent with the main lessons of the Analytic. The objections to which it is open from the standpoint of the Deduction of the Categories are obvious and it is impossible to suppose that Kant was not aware of them. The fact is that the view that things out of all relation to our understanding act upon us and produce sensations in our mind is only a provisional statement to be understood in the light of what is said later on in the *critique*. Kant often states a doctrine in a form which is least removed from the standpoint of the ordinary consciousness and then introduces modifications into it till his real meaning comes out. In the Aesthetic, for example, space is spoken of as a form of sense independent of the categories, but when we come to the Analytic, we learn that it is the sensible representation of the synthesis of homogeneous units effected by the understanding. In the same way, the

apparently realistic theory that 'things-in-themselves' are the opposite of mind and act upon it from without, wears a very different aspect when we come to consider Kant's statements about the intelligible world in the Dialectic. Towards the end of the Analytic, the 'things-in-themselves,' which at the beginning look so like the unknown substance of Locke, are defined as constituting the supersensible world which surrounds and limits the world of experience to which the understanding is confined. This intelligible world, we are informed, is a *terra incognita*, "a wide and stormy ocean, the true home of illusion, where many a fog-bank and iceberg that soon melt away tempt us to believe in new lands, while constantly deceiving the adventurous mariner with vain hopes and involving him in adventures which he can never leave and yet can never bring to an end." In this vast ocean, "the country of truth," the experienced world, "is an island and enclosed by nature itself within limits that can never be changed." The function of the concept of a noumenon "is merely limitative and intended to keep the claims of sensibility

within proper bounds, therefore of negative use only." The noumenon cannot be known, because *we* are so constituted that we can only know sensible objects discursively by means of the categories, but Kant intimates to us even at this stage that what is beyond *our* understanding may nevertheless be the object of a perceptive understanding, an understanding that creates its objects in knowing them, "a process of which we could not understand even the bare possibility." But though a noumenon is incomprehensible by human intellect, the concept of it "remains not only admissible but, as a concept to limit the sphere of sensibility, indispensable."

If the concept of the noumenon serves the purpose of prescribing limits to the *mundus sensibilis*, it cannot be a merely negative concept. That in the light of which we perceive the limits of the phenomenal world, that which defines its boundaries and determines its nature, cannot itself remain entirely unknown. It is impossible to know that an island is surrounded by ocean and yet to remain wholly ignorant as to what ocean means. The light by which you see a thing cannot be invisible. From the concept of

the noumenal world as that which lies beyond the objective world of experience and limits it, Kant is inevitably led to the more positive conception of noumena as Ideas of Reason which give unity to and organize experience. The vague and indeterminate 'things-in-themselves' now become transformed into concepts of reason whose function is to impart to experience "a direction towards a certain unity of which the understanding knows nothing and which is to comprehend all acts of the understanding with regard to any object into an absolute whole." The categories of the understanding constitute experience by connecting phenomena with each other, but in the world of experience so constituted the highest ideal of unity is not realized. "Our faculty of knowledge feels a higher want than merely to spell out phenomena according to their synthetic unity in order to be able to read them as experience." In the phenomenal world objects and events stand related to other objects and events and give rise only to endless series. This does not satisfy reason, which seeks to find a principle of unity beneath the differences of objects. The aim of reason is not merely to refer

the present phenomena of the world to those that precede them in the endless chain of causation, or simply to prove that the world is a whole of interconnected parts, but to trace the total system of things up to an ultimate principle revealed in it. The reason for this demand of reason is to be found in what, according to Kant, are the necessary conditions of experience itself. The purely analytical unity of the self makes experience possible by introducing its own unity into the differences of sense, and in doing so becomes synthetic. By means of its synthetic activity it constitutes the objective world in distinction from which it becomes conscious of itself as a unity. In this way, however, it so to speak loses the purity of its nature, *viz.*,—its undifferentiated unity with itself. To realize such a unity, therefore, becomes its ideal. On the other hand, though unity is introduced into the manifold of sense, its essential difference cannot be completely overcome and this circumstance gives rise to the second Ideal of Reason, *viz.*,—the conception of the world as an unconditioned whole. And, in the third place, the relation of the unity of the self to the experienced world

suggests an all-embracing unity in which their differences are reconciled. The three Ideas of Reason, we thus see, arise from the very nature of human knowledge. As Kant says, "There is in the progression from our knowledge of ourselves (the soul) to a knowledge of the world and through it to a knowledge of the Supreme Being something so natural that it looks like the logical progression of reason from premises to conclusion."

For reasons which it is unnecessary to set forth here, Kant regards the Ideas of Reason as merely regulative and not constitutive. He does not think it possible to be sure that there are real objects corresponding to these ideas or to determine their nature. But, in spite of his agnosticism, he occasionally proceeds to lift the veil and lets us catch glimpses of the noumenal objects, though with the constant reminder that what we are thus enabled to see should not be taken too seriously. Kant, it must be remembered, is not an agnostic who maintains that it is impossible for the human mind to have any idea of the noumenon. He *does* tell us in what sense it is possible to regard the world as an

unconditioned whole and God as *ens realissimum*. All that he insists upon is that it is beyond our power to give any *proof* of the validity of these conceptions. So far as strict knowledge goes, we are unable to step beyond the world of experience.

Now the conjecture which Kant makes about the nature of the 'things-in-themselves' is that they may be intelligible principles analogous to the self. "That which forms the foundation of external phenomena and which so affects our sense as to produce in it the representations of space, matter, form, etc., if considered as a noumenon, might be at the same time the subject of thinking, although by the manner in which it affects our external sense, it produces in us no intuitions of representations, will, etc., but only of space and its determinations."[1] "The substance which, with reference to our external sense, possesses extension might very well by itself possess thoughts which can be represented consciously by its own internal sense. In such wise the same thing which in one respect is called corporeal would in another respect be at the same

[1] *Critique of Pure Reason*, Max Müller's tr., p. 291.

time a thinking being, of which, though we cannot see its thoughts, we can yet see the signs of these phenomenally."[1]

This idea is still further developed when Kant, in dealing with the solution of the third and fourth antinomies, argues that both the alternatives may be true but in different senses. It is possible to conceive of the phenomenal world as the expression of noumenal objects and to say that while the noumena are free causes and have necessary existence, the manifestations of them are contingent and related to each other according to the law of causality. "What in an object of the senses is not itself phenomenal, I call intelligible. If, therefore, what in the world of sense must be considered as phenomenal possesses in itself a faculty which is not the object of sensuous intuition, but through which it can become the cause of phenomena, the *causality* of that being may be considered from *two* sides, as *intelligible* in its *action* as the causality of a thing by itself, and as *sensible* in the *effects* of the action, as the causality of a phenomenon in the world of sense. . . . As all phenomena, not being

[1] *Ibid*, p. 292.

things by themselves, must have for their foundation a transcendental object, determining them as mere representations, there is nothing to prevent us from attributing to that transcendental object, besides the quality through which it becomes phenomenal, a *causality* also which is not phenomenal, although its effect appears in the phenomenon. Every efficient cause, however, must have a *character*, that is, a rule according to which it manifests its causality and without which it would not be a cause. According to this we should have in every subject of the world of sense, first, an *empirical character*, through which its acts, as phenomena, stand with other phenomena in an unbroken connection, according to permanent laws of nature and could be derived from them as their permanent conditions, and in connection with them form the links of one and the same series in the order of nature. Secondly, we should have to allow to it an *intelligible* character also, by which, it is true, it becomes the cause of the same acts as phenomena, but which itself is not subject to any conditions of sensibility, and never phenomenal. We might call the former the character of such a thing as

phenomenon, in the latter, the character of the thing by itself."[1]

The idea which passages like this suggest is that the objects which form parts of the experienced world are, considered in themselves, or viewed as it were from within, akin to self. What appears to us as objects held together in one space and mutually influencing each other, thereby undergoing changes linked together according to the law of causality, are, as noumena, active selves. These active selves or efficient causes, again, are comprised within and form organic elements of the absolutely necessary Being which is the ground of the *mundus sensibilis.* It is essential to remember that in Kant's view there is not *one* intelligible cause but a plurality of intelligible causes, though, ultimately, they are all constituent elements of the one supreme Being. The unity of the absolutely necessary Being must not be confused with the efficient causes which are a plurality. If we carefully consider Kant's statements in regard to the relation between the intelligible world and the sensible world, we find that he affirms three things explicitly

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 436.

or implicitly. In the first place, he maintains that sensible objects are phenomenal expressions of active spiritual essences. These essences, therefore, must be as many as there are distinguishable things. "For every series of conditions, there must be an unconditioned." Successive changes are determinations of a single substance and if each series of changes is the outer expression of what in its intelligible character is an active spiritual being, it follows that a plurality of substances conceived as things by themselves, are a plurality of active selves. "In every subject of the world of sense," Kant tells us, "we should have first an empirical character and secondly, an intelligible character." If so, it cannot but be that behind the plurality of phenomenal substances there are a plurality of noumenal beings or spirits.

In the second place, it is Kant's view that the intelligible causes of phenomena are not distinct and isolated from each other but integral parts of the one ultimate unconditioned Being. If there is a nexus between phenomenal substances, if they are real only as they mutually determine each other, there must necessarily

be an ideal nexus between the noumenal realities of which they are expressions. In fact, Kant's thought in this matter is not much different from what Lotze, drawing his inspiration mainly from Leibniz, worked out afterwards. His supreme Being is very like Lotze's, and includes within itself as elements of its being all the intelligible causes which are behind phenomena.

In the third place, the way in which Kant solves the third and fourth antinomies necessarily leads to the view that the phenomenal world is the expression of the intelligible world and is, therefore, involved in its being. Kant does not develop a consistent theory of the relation between the *mundus intelligibilis* and *mundus sensibilis*. According to the Analytic, the phenomenal world is constituted by the understanding and is, therefore, only an appearance *to us* of the real world lying behind it, but the view which the Dialectic suggests is that phenomena are the *empirical* character of the *noumena* revealed in them and are, therefore, not phenomena merely in relation to us but also in relation to the noumena themselves.

Kant's conception of the supreme Being carries his thought a stage further and reveals his meaning more fully. He regards it as the ideal principle from which nothing positive is excluded and of which everything is an expression. "If our reason," he argues, "postulates a transcendental substratum for all determinations, a substratum which contains, as it were, the whole store of material whence all possible predicates of things may be taken, we shall find that such a substratum is nothing but the idea of the sum total of reality. In that case all true negations are nothing but *limitations*, which they could not be unless there were the substratum of the unlimited."[1] The *ens realissimum* is the perfect whole from which particular realities are derived by limitation. "All the manifoldness of things consists only of so many modes of limiting the concept of the highest reality that forms their common substratum, in the same way as all figures are only different modes of limiting endless space." The most perfect Being is the ultimate unity which expresses itself in and contains within itself all

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 465.

particular things which, in their true nature, are akin to self. Kant's use of the disjunctive syllogism as the symbol of the *ens realissimum* throws light on his meaning. The disjunctive syllogism represents the idea of the complete determination of a whole through its exhaustive expression in its mutually exclusive members, each of which is limited and defined by its relations to the rest, and if it typifies the most perfect Being it is because the most perfect Being is the ideal unity on which all things are grounded and from which they proceed. "The transcendental major of the complete determination of all things," observes Kant, "is nothing but a representation of the sum total of all reality and not only a concept which comprehends all predicates, according to their transcendental content *under* itself, but *within* itself; and the complete determination of every thing depends on the limitation of the total of this reality, of which some part is ascribed to the thing, while the rest is excluded from it, a procedure which agrees with the *aut—aut* of a disjunctive major and with the determination of the object through one of the

members of that division in the minor. Thus the procedure of reason by which the transcendental ideal becomes the basis of the determination of all possible things is analogous to that which reason follows in disjunctive syllogism."[1]

We have distinguished six main stages in the development of Kant's concept of the 'thing-in-itself.' First, it comes before us as the unknown cause of our sensuous affections. Then it is the unnavigated ocean that bounds the island of the world of experience. Next, it is the regulative idea which imparts unity to our experience. Next, it is the analogue of the unity of self-consciousness. Next, it is the unconditioned background of sensible phenomena and the sum total of the intelligible causes to which series of changes are referred. And, finally, it is the *ens realissimum*, the perceptive understanding "that thinks in intuitive ideas in some such way as the creative genius thinks in images." The 'thing-in-itself,' in its ultimate development, is no other than God who, in the words of Paulsen, "is the primeval cause of the possibility of all being, out of which that

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 466.

of every entity must be regarded as derived by limitation ; so that there is no entity which would not be posited in God's being."[1]

It is true that Kant, who thus conducts us step by step into the intelligible world, frequently turns round and reminds us that it is only dreamland and must not be mistaken for *terra firma*. This, however, need not unduly discourage us. Kant's agnosticism, after all, is a very thin veil which but imperfectly conceals the deep-rooted convictions of his mind. As Paulsen rightly observes, he " has a really transcendent metaphysic. He gives his complete adherence to it as the rational view of the world. But it is not possible as *a priori* demonstrable knowledge of the understanding, as scholastic philosophy tried to be. From such a standpoint only mathematical physics is possible, which is concerned solely with phenomena and their necessary relations in space and time. Reason, on the other hand, necessarily passes beyond the phenomenal world to the intelligible world, which is a world of existing ideas that are conjoined by logical and teleological relations and

[1] *Immanuel Kant : His Life and Doctrine*, English tr., p. 221.

are intuitively present in the divine intellect... It is clear that this is the Platonic-Leibnizian philosophy. Kant had it constantly before his eyes in Baumgarten's Text Book. Reality, as the understanding thinks, in contradistinction to sensibility, is a system of monads which are joined in a unity by means of preëstablished harmony or an *influxus idealis*, like that which exists between the parts of a construction of thought or a poem. The ultimate ground of the unity of things is their radical unity in God's being, while bodies, on the contrary, are merely *phenomena substantiata*. Kant never discarded any of these ideas."[1]

Now the conception of the ultimate reality as a system of minds in which an all-inclusive spiritual principle is realized is also the central idea of Hegel's philosophy. Interpreters of Hegel have so insisted upon his monism that they have almost overlooked the pluralism which is as much a distinguishing feature of his philosophy as its monism. He has been accused of an uncompromising pantheism, his universe has been characterized as the 'block universe' and, in entire oblivion of what is urged in the

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 276.

introduction to the *Phenomenology of Mind* and elsewhere, he has been supposed to deduce the concrete world of differences from a unity as abstract as the Being of Parmenides. But at least one profound student of Hegel, Dr. McTaggart, has tried to show that Hegel's Absolute is not a unity in which all differences disappear, but an impersonal unity of finite but perfect selves.[1] That such an interpretation is possible only proves that pluralism is a very noticeable feature of Hegel's doctrine. The truth is that Hegel is much nearer to Leibniz in his outlook on the universe than is commonly supposed. Like Leibniz he conceives of the world as an organic unity of spiritual beings, each of which ideates the whole universe from its own unique point of view. The main difference, and it is a very important difference, is that while Leibniz is not quite clear as to the nature of the monad of monads, sometimes conceiving of it as external to the monads that compose the world, sometimes reducing it almost to the preëstablished harmony, and

[1] See chapters on "Human Immortality" and "The Personality of the Absolute" in *Studies in Hegelian Cosmology*.

sometimes viewing it as immanent in the world-system inspite of its independence of that system, Hegel regards the Absolute not indeed, as Dr. McTaggart thinks, as an impersonal unity of persons, but as the universal self which is particularized and completely present in every one of its constituent selves. The universal self has no content other than the individual selves. It is the organic unity of them and has no existence apart from them. Its relation to its component selves is analogous to the relation of the unity of our own self to its determinations. The human self is not a mere aggregate of its states, nor, on the other hand, is it something by itself, apart from its passing modifications. Its unity is expressed completely and indivisibly in each of its determinations, and, though it has no content other than them, it is not a sum of them but their ideal unity in which their differences are at once preserved and annulled. The Absolute of Hegel is subject-object. It is the all-inclusive unity which is bifurcated into the subject, which is such only as it goes out of itself to the object (the good), and the object, which is real only as it centres

itself in the subject (the true). The necessary counterpart of the subject is the object. But the object is not a bare unity: it is a complex system of interrelated things. Now it seems to me that where most of the commentators of Hegel have gone wrong is in conceiving of the Absolute as subject, which is the correlative of the Absolute as object, as a monadic unity. But how can the counterpart of a *system* of things be an undifferentiated unity? It is no answer to say that the subject is differentiated into objects. In being thus differentiated the subject is not separated from its objects, but goes forth to them and, undiminished and undivided, is present to each one of them as its sustaining principle. To see this is to perceive that the universal self is no mere unity but a totality of the selves of these objects. In other words, within the all-inclusive unity of the Absolute, the correlated elements, the subject and the object, are not, the former one, and the latter many, but each of them is at once one and many. Every object has behind it the universal self and is, therefore, ideal-real which as real excludes all other reals held together in one world, and as ideal embraces

within its consciousness and from its special point of view as the self of a definite object the whole of that world. And as all objects are comprised within the unity of the world, so the interpenetrating selves of these objects are unified in the Absolute self.

I have elsewhere[1] tried to set forth the reasons which lead to the conclusion that this is the real view of Hegel, the Leibnizian cast of which is evident. It is the view which is distinctly suggested by Plato's conception of the Good, and the indebtedness of Hegel to Greek philosophy and particularly to Plato and Aristotle must never be forgotten. The very divisions of his system—Logic, the Philosophy of Nature, and the Philosophy of Mind correspond to Plato's classification of philosophical topics into Dialectic, Physics, and Ethics; the name given to the method employed and its spirit is the same, and one would not be far from the truth in maintaining that the idealism of Plato supplemented by Aristotle's conception of the material world as evolving from potentiality to actuality,

[1] In my *Hegelianism and Human Personality* published by the University of Calcutta.

as seeking to realize explicitly the form which is immanent in it and is its moving principle, furnishes much of the material of Hegel's philosophy.[1] It really arose from the study of Kant with the eyes of Plato and Aristotle, and of Plato and Aristotle with the eyes of Kant. The likeness between Hegel's Absolute Idea and Plato's Idea of Good, somewhat remote though it may be, is unmistakable. Just as the Idea of Good is not a unity reached by abstraction but by synthesis, a unity which organically connects all other Ideas with each other and with itself and gives to each its proper place in the total system, the Ideas being not mere things nor mere concepts of the mind but thinking beings, so the Absolute Idea, if we rightly view it, is the subject-object which, as subject, is a community of selves and, as object, a system of interrelated things.

Hegel's view of the relation between the finite and the infinite expresses his meaning. The infinite is not an endless series of finites, nor is it something beyond the finite. On both

[1] The Platonic influence on both of them, no doubt, largely accounts for the similarity between the views of Leibniz and Hegel.

of these notions he pours contempt and points out that an infinite which is other than the finite stands limited by it and is, therefore, only another finite. The genuine infinite is *in* the finite and is its ideality. This means that everything which we call finite has a double aspect: as a particular object limited by other objects from which it is distinguished, it is real; but as that which returns upon itself from the process of going beyond itself that makes it finite, it is ideal. This ideality of the thing makes it an independent being—a being-for-self. The whole tone of Hegel's discussion of the categories of ideality, the infinite and being-for-self shows that he does not mean by these terms a merely general principle of the unity of all things, but a principle which is general by being in the first instance the ideality of each particular object. At this stage he emphasizes the plurality rather than the unity of things: the category of being-for-self leads directly to that of the one and many. Hegel's ideal-real is very similar to the monad of Leibniz which has the whole universe as its object of thought, though, as an individual, it has its special position in the world and

excludes and is excluded by other beings like it. "Ideality only has a meaning or import when it is the ideality of something: but this something is not a mere indefinite this or that, but determinate being (there and then) which is characterised as reality, and which, if retained in isolation, possesses no truth."[1] What is clearly meant is that every finite object is *also* ideal; reality and ideality are two aspects of one and the same thing.

But the ideality of a thing makes it go beyond itself and bring the whole universe within the sweep of its comprehension. In other words, the ideal principle is at once individualizing and universalizing. If it makes the individual what it is, it also brings it into connection with other individuals and reduces them to a system, in the whole and in each element of which it is concretely embodied. This is the aspect of the truth brought out in Hegel's doctrine of the notion. The notion is a concrete universal which particularizes itself in each individual; and because it is a universal, it cannot be confined to any particular individual but

[1] Wallace's *The Logic of Hegel*, 1st ed., p. 154.

passes beyond it to other individuals and thus becomes the immanent bond of union between them. The individual in which the notion is expressed is not, it is needless to say, a part of the notion; it is the *whole* notion in a particular form. The individuals, therefore, are also the universal, and the universal is also the organic unity of the individuals. The universal, that is to say, is a "macrocosm made up of microcosms which is all in every part." The notion as a spiritual principle of unity of all things, as that which connects all things with and yet separates them from each other by its presence to each one of them whole and undivided, must be conceived as mind. "It is one of the deepest and truest instances of insight to be found in the *Critique of Reason*," Hegel tells us, "that the unity which constitutes the essence of the concept is recognised as the original synthetic unity of apperception, as the unity of the 'I think' or of self-consciousness." Now if the notion's own specification "can only be an existence in which it appears as identical with itself and whose factors are notions posited by itself," and if the notion is self, then it follows that the

ultimate reality must be viewed as a self of selves, a universal self that finds expression in its constituent individuals which also are selves.[1]

It appears then that Hegel does not conceive of the world as centred in a single undifferentiated self. Each object, in so far as it is ideal, is the centre of the world-system; but as the objects mutually imply each other and therefore constitute *one* world, their selves also come together and constitute the one universal self. Or, to look at the same truth from the other side, the universal self manifests itself in a plurality of objects and is, therefore, differentiated not merely into these objects but also into their selves. The Absolute self, in short, is, if one, also many: it is a one-in-many. It cognizes the universe from all possible points of view and its knowledge of it from the standpoint of a particular object is the ideality of that object.

In the philosophy of Lotze, we find the principles of Leibniz developed along monistic

[1] The Absolute Idea, which is the final category of Hegel, is what the notion is. It does not contain any new determination but unfolds explicitly all that is implied in the notion.

lines. Lotze avowedly builds on the foundations of Leibniz, but he restores to the world the unity which, in his view, Leibniz destroys. This charge, however, is not entirely true. Leibniz, no doubt, begins by emphasizing the separateness of the monads, but, in the end, he is compelled to conceive of them as proceeding from and depending on God and as organized by Him into the unity of a coherent world. Lotze makes this deeper thought of Leibniz prominent. He shows that so far from being independent of each other, things are real only as they are related to each other. To be is to stand in relations. But the relatedness of things cannot be made intelligible unless we regard them as modes of the one all-embracing Absolute. And as the Absolute is mind, its modes which appear to us as sensible objects must also be conceived as minds Lotze is fond of emphasizing his difference from Hegel, but no careful student can fail to perceive the similarity of the reasoning by which he is led to his conception of the Absolute, to that of Hegel. His discussion of substance, causality and the interaction of things, corresponds closely to Hegel's

treatment of the categories of substance, causality and reciprocity. And the argument that things can determine each other because they are expressions of an underlying unity is only another form of the reasoning which leads Hegel from reciprocity to the notion. If due stress is laid on the pluralistic element of Hegel, his kinship with Lotze and of both with Leibniz cannot fail to be apparent.

The fundamental idea which Leibniz was the first to introduce into modern philosophy and which in one form or another has been retained by Kant, Hegel and Lotze is that the world, in its last interpretation, is spirit whose nature it is to be one in many. Leibniz was never able to reconcile unity and plurality in a consistent manner, but he distinctly accords recognition to both of these aspects of reality. The unity of the world is due to its being the embodiment of the purpose of God, but of the relation of God to the world, Leibniz's conception, as I have already remarked, is somewhat nebulous. Kant, like Leibniz, conceives of the 'things-in-themselves' as minds grounded on God and, therefore, inherently connected with each other.

Very similar is the idea of Lotze. Both agree in thinking that God transcends and is also immanent in the world, but neither seems to comprehend the significance of the great thought of Leibniz that every monad is a complete reality and is cognizant of the whole universe, at least potentially. Hegel, on the other hand, adopts this view and regards every object, in so far as it is ideal or being-for-self, as the notion itself in a determinate form and, therefore, like the notion all-inclusive. But he rejects the doctrine that God transcends the world. The Absolute experience contains nothing more than the experiences of the selves in which the Absolute is individualized and is the synthesis of them. It is the fusion of the different ways of representing the one world from the view-points of the individuals that compose it.

The Absolute and the Finite Self

In his great dialogue, the *Parmenides*, Plato argues that if the one has being, all other things are. The being of the one is not capable of being separated from the others. The existence of the one means the existence of the others which share in its being and are, therefore, whole and infinite without prejudice to their plurality. The others having parts must partake of the whole and be the whole of which they are the parts. Each part, that is to say, is also an absolute one. The result of the union of the others with the one, without which they would not be others than one, is that "the one appears to create a new element in them which gives to them limitation in relation to one another, whereas in their own nature they have no limit." The many, Plato means to say, in their distinction from each other are limited. Each is limited by the relations in which it stands to the others and to the

whole, but inasmuch as it partakes of the whole, it, limited from one point of view, is the whole and infinite from another. In short, all particular beings are both finite and infinite.

The great truth to which Plato gives expression in his own way in the *Parmenides* is, I think, not sufficiently recognized by the speculative Idealism of to-day. What this Idealism has successfully done is to show that the world has being only as the objective expression of the Absolute mind. Nature, as a systematic totality of interrelated things, presupposes a spiritual principle of unity of which it is the necessary manifestation. But what is the relation between the things which make up nature and the mind it reveals? We are told, and with truth, that the unity of mind and the differences of the world mutually imply each other, that unity is *of* differences, and differences have no meaning apart from the unity of the self in which they are centered. "The main result of modern philosophy and especially of modern idealism," Caird tells us, "has been to put a concrete in place of an abstract unity, or, in other words, to vindicate the essential correlation of the self and the

not-self." The unity for which idealism pleads is not a unity *beyond* all difference but *in* difference. But if this unity is conceived as only the correlative of the many, it inevitably becomes distinguished from and, therefore, limited by the many, and is, in consequence, reduced to the level of one among many. The one regarded as the correlative of the many is what the many are not, and is, therefore, only a numerical unity. Of course, idealism goes further than the mere conception of the correlativity of the one and many and regards the many as the expression of an inclusive unity. But the full consequence of this view is not realized. The many which body forth the ultimate one partake, as Plato saw so clearly, of the one; and each of them, in spite of the finitude arising from its distinction from and negative relation to the others, is, in virtue of its participation in the one, also whole and infinite. In other words, what we call things are also minds. They are, of course, not minds in isolation from each other and on their own account, but as integral parts of the Absolute mind. If objects are real only as elements of the world-system and if that system is

the embodiment of a universal mind, they cannot be mere objects but must be centers of an all-inclusive experience, individualized expressions of the one ultimate mind. The differences in which the Absolute finds expression are determinate forms of the Absolute itself, and each of them must, therefore, be conceived as an infinite mind, infinite, in Spinoza's language, *in suo genere* and *in* the Absolute. What appear to us as things are in their inner being the centers from which the Absolute experiences and appreciates in infinite ways the one world in which it is revealed. They are like the monads of Leibniz, but not sundered and self-centered, conscious of the whole world not potentially but fully and adequately; and individuals, not in their own strength, but as included within and contributing to the life of the Absolute Individual. As Royce puts it: "Whoever conceives the Absolute as a self conceives it as in its form inclusive of an infinity of various but interwoven and so of intercommunicating selves, each one of which represents the totality of the Absolute in its own way, and with its own unity, so that the simplest conceivable structure of the Absolute life would

be statable only in terms of an infinitely great variety of types of purpose and of fulfilment, intertwined in the most complex fashions. . . . We have to regard the Absolute in its wholeness as comprising many selves in the most various interrelation."[1]

The Absolute experience is the totality of the experiences of the individuals embraced within it, in which its whole meaning is embodied. These individuals are relative wholes within the unity of the Absolute and contribute in various and unique ways to its total purpose. The Absolute purpose is realized in and through the purposes of its constituent individuals, and the several meanings of these individuals are coördinated with each other through their subordination to the life of the Absolute in its wholeness. This does not mean that the Absolute life and purpose is anything other than the meanings of the individuals in which it is realized, any more than the ideal and purpose of the State is other than the aims and ideals of its citizens which are brought into coördination with each other through their subordination to it. Just as the others

[1] *The World and ths Individual*, Vol. II, p. 298.

partaking of the One in Plato's *Parmenides* are themselves one and whole having parts, each part being infinite, no matter to what proximate whole it may belong, so the individuals in which the Absolute is expressed, possessing its nature, are subordinate wholes realized in their own differences which, parts of parts as they are, retain, as integral elements of the Absolute, their inalienable property of being whole and infinite. The subordinate wholes do not necessarily exclude but may overlap each other in consequence of the same parts forming constituent moments of different wholes. As the same citizen may be a member of various corporations within the unity of the State, so the same self may belong to different individualized systems within the ultimate unity of the Absolute. The complex and comprehensive meaning of the whole controls and determines the distribution and organization into subordinate systems of the finite-infinite individuals in which the Absolute is realized, and, if that meaning requires it, the constitution of these systems may undergo changes through the rearrangement of the elements forming them.

The type of idealism outlined above is, of course, monism, for it insists upon the unity of the Absolute ; but what is important to remember is that the Absolute is one, not in spite of but because of the differences in which it is expressed. These differences, to be sure, are objective existences, but objective existences which, by reason of the embodiment of the Absolute mind in them, are also selves. It, therefore, is by no means hostile to the principle for which pluralism contends, only it urges that the plurality of the finite but all-inclusive selves rests upon a unity in which they are all gathered up without detriment to their distinction from each other. The plurality of selves does not simply disappear in the Absolute, nor does the Absolute transcend these selves while sustaining and upholding them, as Lotze and others seem to suppose. The content of the Absolute is no other than the contents of its constituent selves, though it is not a mere sum of them. As the synthesis of them, it gives a new value to them but is not other than they. As a living organism consists only of its members but is not simply their aggregate, as society

is made up of individuals but is not merely a collection of them, so the Absolute self is a complex unity which does not go beyond, and yet reinterprets and gives a higher significance to the experiences of the finite but perfect individuals [1] that compose it. Speculative idealism, thus interpreted, incorporates pluralism into itself.

The view that objects of experience are in their ultimate nature selves does not mean that they are reducible to ideas of the mind, or that there is no distinction between things and minds. A thing is a self only in the sense that, viewed from within, it is the subject to which the whole circle of objective experience, relatively opposed to it, is referred. It is one of the infinite points of view from which the Absolute contemplates and appreciates the world and thus ensures the richness and complexity of its experience. The external order of the physical world has for its counterpart a system of interpenetrating selves in which the Absolute is realized and of which it is the unity. The reality of nature as a system of reciprocally determining things is not

[1] The expression is Dr. McTaggart's.

denied. All that is done is to point out that such a system has for its presupposition an individualized system of minds. In his suggestive article on "Two Types of Idealism," Professor Creighton rightly insists upon the necessity of "maintaining the contrast between the material order of nature and the conscious order of mind." "Speculative idealism," he truly observes, "has to accept nature in very much the sense in which it is presented to us by the assumptions of common sense and the physical sciences as an objective order. I fail to find any logical compulsion in the supposed interest of monism to reduce matter to terms of mind, or to interpret it with panpsychism as at bottom composed of mind stuff or psychical entities. All that monism can legitimately demand is that there shall be a *universe*; it cannot on *a priori* grounds require that this universe shall be all of one piece or stuff. The conception of nature and mind as complementary in character satisfies, it appears to me, all the legitimate demands of monism." [2] Idealism can have nothing to say against the main

[2] Philosophical Review, Vol. XXVI, No. 5, pp. 533-534.

contention of realism. Instead of reducing things to states of consciousness, it allies itself with realism in seeking to destroy the root from which this sort of speculation grows. What are called secondary qualities, it urges, belong to things quite as much as the primary qualities. To separate them from each other and to refer the former to the perceiving mind and the latter to external objects was the cardinal error of Descartes, Locke and others. Berkeley went further along this path of error by reducing primary qualities also to ideas of the mind. As against these views realism rightly urges that objects must be credited with the primary as well as the secondary qualities. Nay, we must go further still and perceive that besides the primary and seoondary qualities, things also have what have been called tertiary qualities, *viz.*, the æsthetic qualities revealed to the poet and the artist. But if realism is so bountiful and lavishes on things qualities of different sorts in such an ungrudging spirit, why should it not be more generous still and give to them *minds* in order to make it possible for them to enjoy their wealth of qualities? Idealism does not see

why the fountain of realism's charity should suddenly run dry as soon as things are vested with diverse qualities. Surely it is intolerable that they should be supposed to have everything except that which alone can make all else worth having, *viz.*, mind. So far then from reducing existing entities to ideas of the mind, idealism of the right kind does the very opposite: it carries mind over to things. It is so greatly in earnest with the doctrine that things are real that it has no patience with the futility of realism when it fails to see that things must have mind to understand that they are real. It, therefore, is in no way hostile to realism, but incorporates the truth of it into itself.

Idealism, as interpreted above, must not be confused with panpsychism, though it heartily endorses the view of Fechner and others that minds can be included in a larger and more comprehensive mind. As Professor Pringle-Pattison points out in his recent volume of Gifford lectures, panpsychism commends itself to many minds because it seems to spiritualize the universe through and through and to afford a way of escape from determinism. But, in

avoiding the Scylla of determinism, it is possible to be driven to the Charybdis of irrational contingency mistaken for freedom. Genuine freedom is based upon the necessary order of nature and is impossible without it: The *truth* of necessity, in Hegel's words, is freedom. "The view of nature as a uniform and permanent system of natural laws," as Professor Creighton says, "is a necessary element in a rational experience. The contrast (and in a certain sense the opposition to subjectivity which we are conscious of when facing natural objects and forces) is an important influence and element in a sane and normal life. . . . A steady dependable world so far from being an irritation or balking of reason appears to me to furnish the only possible basis for rationality."[1] It is in the fixed objective order "unmoved by our clamor, indifferent to our moods" that the freedom of the Absolute spirit, in which finite rational beings participate, is realized.

The other motive which inspires panpsychism is to spiritualize the universe, but in the end it completely fails to effect this purpose.

[1] *Philosophical Review*, Vol. XXVI, No. 5, p. 534.

Taking its stand upon the law of continuity, it assumes that as we go down the scale of being, things are accompanied by diminishing degrees of consciousness, but that we never reach the zero point. There is nothing which has not at least an indefinite sort of consciousness or semi-consciousness. For this assumption, however, there is not a particle of empirical evidence. Whether or not objects have each a separate and limited consciousness is a question of fact and not a speculative problem, and must be decided, as all questions of fact are decided, by evidence. Apart from this, it is difficult to understand how out of the combination of consciousnesses of various grades and of different degrees of clearness and distinctness, ranging from the mere drop of consciousness of an atom to the clear consciousness of a wide-awake human being, the perfect consciousness of the Absolute can arise. There cannot be more in the total than is to be found in the elements put together. The Absolute mind is the totality of the finite minds; it does not contain any additional factor, nor has it the power to transform the dim and fragmentary consciousnesses of its

component souls into its own distinct and adequate consciousness. How then does the perfect arise out of the imperfect, the clear out of the obscure? If the Absolute is composed of numberless units, most of which are only semi-conscious, are we not forced to the conclusion that in its own consciousness there must be shades along with light, dark patches of ignorance along with illuminated spots of knowledge? The Absolute can be regarded as a totality of selves or rather as an individualized system of selves only if we suppose that its constituent selves share, each in its own way, in the perfection of the Absolute life.

Mind, according to panpsychism, is the self-appearance of matter and matter in the appearance of one mind to another. A thing, as seen from within, is a conscious being, but in so far as it is the object of knowledge of another conscious being, it is what we call matter. But if each object has a separate mind of its own, a mind which is itself from another point of view, how is it possible for it to go beyond itself so as to bring other things within the fold of its knowledge? How can panpsychism explain the self-transcendence

of a conscious being without which the combination of minds into a larger mind would not be possible? If A's consciousness is confined within the limits of A, that of B within the limits of B and so on, it is difficult to understand how the gulf between A and B can be bridged so as to make the inclusive consciousness of a more comprehensive mind possible. One thing, in short, cannot possibly appear to another if the mental counterpart of it be supposed to be the counterpart only of itself. Its ideas, being wholly subjective, cannot bring it into touch with realities other than and beyond it. Consistent panpsychism has to face the difficulty which confronted Leibniz when he attempted to explain the unity of the world. He could do it only by having recourse to the hypothesis of preëstablished harmony. But his path was smoothed by his profound doctrine that each monad in principle ideates the whole universe. This, in effect, amounted to the abandonment of the theory of the exclusiveness of the monads. Panpsychism, however, conceives of the units of the world-system as having ideas which are the subjective counterparts of themselves. With this doctrine,

the view that lesser minds are comprised within the ultimate unity of the mind of the universe cannot be reconciled, for such inclusion involves the self-transcendence of each constituent mind.

We thus see that individuals, conceived as going beyond themselves in their knowledge and sharing in the perfection of the Absolute in which they are unified, are not mere psycho-physical entities or mind stuffs, but beings completely self-conscious and infinite, each in its own kind. In other words, they are differentiations of the Absolute, and if we are to call them parts of the Absolute at all, it is necessary to remember that they are parts equal to the whole. Panpsychism is quite right in conceiving of the Absolute as a unity of differences, but it errs in thinking that such a unity arises out of the composition of the fragmentary consciousnesses of which physical objects are the outer aspect. It is not a monadic unity but a self of selves, a one-in-many revealed in the world, the structure and organization of which bears witness to its nature.

Such a conception of the Absolute is by no means so novel as it may appear at first sight.

As Berkeley claimed that his ideal theory is more in harmony with the convictions of the man in the street than the views of learned philosophers who talk about the 'that I know not what,' so we may say that the theory outlined above is, after all, the expression in philosophical language of what every pious man implicitly believes. Is not God present everywhere in the world complete and undivided, and is he not the life and soul of everything in which he is? Does not this lead us, if we are consistent, to the conception that the One God, as the indwelling God of countless objects, is yet many? The God who is in the pen with which I write is the same and yet not the same with the God who is in the helmet of the Kaiser, the God in the tongue of the orator denouncing German barbarities is not quite the same as the God in the torpedo which sank the *Lusitania*. And yet these various Gods are the one and only God. If we ponder over such considerations, is the conception of the Absolute as a self differentiated into many selves likely to seem so very surprising?

The Absolute experience, we have seen, cannot be regarded as the synthesis of finite

experiences: it is the finite selves, on the contrary, which arise out of the limitation of the Absolute life and experience. The existence of finite selves is, of course, an undeniable empirical fact and the only rational explanation of them is that they are the manifestations, partial reproductions of the selves into which the Absolute is differentiated. It is not necessary to discuss at this time of day the theory of the creation of souls out of nothing by a God external to them. The difficulties of such a view are well known. The fundamental facts from which we must start are that human beings exist and that they are aware of their finitude. Now the consciousness of finitude, of limitation of any sort, implies the transcendence of it. A merely finite being would not know that it is finite. The fool does not think that he is a fool, nor does the lunatic know his condition. It is only a Socrates who can say, 'I know nothing'; the lunatic who begins to suspect that something is wrong with him is on the way to recovery. Man is notoriously conscious of his finitude, he has always made this the burden of his complaint. This is possible because, finite as

he is, he is rooted in the infinite, wells up from the infinite. It is the infinite, in short, that is revealed in him. The idea of the infinite, as even Spencer has shown, is not a negative idea; it is a positive datum of thought, the presupposition and ground of the finite.

The finite self, we thus see, is a partial reproduction of the Absolute. No other explanation is consistent with its essential nature. But we have seen that the Absolute life is distributed into its component centers of experience and has no content over and above them. Man, therefore, can only be a fragmentary expression of a differentiation of the Absolute or of a subordinate system of such differentiations. Every object, we have already argued, is, ideally, a finite but perfect self in which the Absolute is realized. The human body, therefore, must be viewed as a center from which the Absolute experiences in a unique way the whole of existence. As such a center it is a determinate form of the Absolute self. The fragmentary being, man, is only a very limited area of this deeper self detached from it, and it is through it and not directly that he is included in the

Absolute. The limited content of his mind is supplemented by that of his transcendental self and as so supplemented forms an element of the Absolute life and experience. The deficiencies of finite consciousnesses, that is to say, are made good before they are allowed to enter the sanctuary of the Absolute.

This theory bears resemblance to that worked out by Royce, and it is encouraging to feel that in making these venture-some excursions into the difficult regions of speculative philosophy, one has the support of so eminent an authority. "In God, in the eternal world, and in unity, yet in contrast with all other individual lives," argues Royce, "my own self whose consciousness is here so flickering attains an insight into my own reality and uniqueness." "We accordingly assert that our life, as hid from us now, in the life of God has another form of consciousness than the one which we now possess, so that while now we see through a glass darkly, in God we know even as we are known."[1] In answer to the question, what is the nature of the completed self in the eternal world, as

[1] *The World and the Individual*, Vol. II. pp. 435-436.

distinguished from the human individual who is a finite being with a beginning in time, Royce says: "The plain answer of course is that, as the complete expression of a self-representative system of purpose and fulfilment it is there, *viz.*, in the eternal world, no longer finite but infinite. Yet it differs from the Absolute self in being *partial*, in requiring the other individuals as its own supplement and in distinguishing itself from them in such wise as to make their purposes not wholly and in every sense its own. It is, as Spinoza would have said of his divine attributes, 'infinite in its own kind,' only that, to be sure, its existence is not independent of that of the other individuals, as the Spinozistic attributes are independent of one another. For it is not related to these other selves *merely* through the common relation to God. On the contrary, it is just as truly related to God by *means* of its relation to them. Its life with them is an eternally fulfilled social life, and the completion of this eternal order also means the self-conscious expression of God, the individual of individuals who dwells in all as they in him."[1]

[1] *Op. cit.*, pp. 446-447.

The Absolute, as the individual of individuals of which human selves are only adumbrations, contains the contents of these selves as integral parts of itself. They, as elements of the Absolute experience, no doubt acquire a new meaning, but the Absolute experience is what it is, not through the exclusion but the inclusion of them. There is, therefore, no barrier, no difference of kind, between reality and appearance. The dualism between noumena and phenomena, the world of verities as known to God and the world of appearances as presented to us, has, in one form or another, dominated philosophical thought since the days of Plato, though no one has realized the difficulties of this view more clearly than Plato himself. Parmenides, in the dialogue named after him, asks Socrates, "Will God, having absolute knowledge have a knowledge of human things?" "Why not," answers Socrates. "Because, Socrates," rejoins Parmenides, "we have admitted that the ideas are not valid in relation to human thought, nor human things in relation to them, the relations of either are limited to their respective spheres. And if God has this perfect authority and

perfect knowledge, his authority cannot rule us, nor his knowledge know us, or any human thing; just as our authority does not extend to the gods nor our knowledge know anything which is divine, so by parity of reasoning, they, being gods, are not our masters, neither do they know the things of men." "Yet surely," answers Socrates, almost in despair, "to deprive God of knowledge is almost monstrous." Plato sees quite clearly that the only solution of the problem is to break down the barrier between divine knowledge and human knowledge, though how this is to be done he does not indicate in definite terms and with decision.

Kant's distinction between the world of 'things in themselves' as the object of a perceptive understanding and the world of our experience is, in principle, the same as the Platonic distinction. The theory of Kant, however, is in a state of unstable equilibrium and, closely scrutinized, is found to contain elements which make the surmounting of its dualism inevitable. If we consider only the teaching of the Analytic, we shall have to say that the objective world is strictly relative to our intelligence and does not

in any way represent the thing-in-itself. It is a veil which conceals from us the intelligible world, and reason has no power to draw it aside. The forms of perception and thought have no application to, and do not express the nature of the world beyond phenomena. Of the noumenon we cannot say anything except that it is. And yet it is impossible to pin Kant down to this view. His discussion of the third and fourth antinomies brings out the truth that phenomena, as combined into a series of causes and effects, suggest that they are grounded on intelligible principles analogous to self. Objects, it would seem, have a double character, an intelligible character and an empirical character in inseparable union with each other. This means that noumena are not exclusive of phenomena but include them in their own being. The view of the phenomenal world as an intelligible system expressive of mind is still more explicitly suggested in the *Critique of Judgment*. Nature is here conceived as a system of things adapted to the cognitive faculties of man, and it is in this conception that we find a solution of the baffling problem of the Analytic regarding the possibility

of a manifold of sense being made to conform to the categories. The sensations can be subsumed under the categories because, after all, they are not a chaotic manifold but elements of a purposive unity already connected harmoniously with each other. What is this but to say that our knowledge of nature is the self-communication to us of the spirit immanent in it? Kant, of course, does not say this in so many words, but if we are to take seriously the doctrine that the phenomena of nature respond to our forms of knowledge, we must regard them as elements of a noumenon akin to and in fellowship with our spirit. The idea of objects as capable of relation to intelligence leads to the idea of them as produced by the self-determination of a subject. Kant's whole theory of knowledge rests upon the doctrine that in order to the possibility of experience sensations must be brought under the categories, and it becomes an impossible doctrine unless we assume that reality is so constituted that it answers to the principles of the understanding. How otherwise can understanding so control sense as to make it conform to itself? Imagination can combine sensations agreeably

to the categories only if sensations do not resist and come prepared for the synthetic operation. This is exactly what the *Critique of Judgment* affirms, and if the validity of this view is to be upheld, the doctrine of the relativity of knowledge, so prominent in the Analytic, must go by board.

It is possible to conceive of the relation between noumena and phenomena in three different ways: (1) We may suppose that the noumenal world is different from and unrelated to the phenomenal world to which the forms of our consciousness do not apply; (2) the noumenon may be regarded as the phenomenal world viewed as the manifestation of the self for which it is; (3) the phenomenal world may be regarded as only a part of a larger world in which the Absolute mind is adequately revealed. Our modes of thought and perception express the nature of a section and not the whole of reality—that section which acts upon our organism and to which we have to adapt ourselves in order to live. Kant is inclined to favor the first view, but his teaching is not only not inconsistent with but agrees better with the third view. The view that in

nature, as we know it, the Absolute is completely revealed, is, in spite of the philosophical garb in which it is dressed, an utterly indefensible kind of anthropomorphism. If nature related to our intelligence is the full revelation of the Absolute spirit, that spirit can only be an enlarged edition of the finite spirit and will be of no avail for the purpose of solving the problems to which the imperfections of our consciousness give rise. The categories of the human understanding, for example, are not a completely unified system ; and if the contents of the Absolute consciousness are not richer and more coherent than the contents of the human consciousness, we have to admit that even for the Absolute the lacunæ of thought and experience are not filled up and, as a consequence, the different elements of them are not brought into perfect accord with each other. The antinomies of thought arise because we, so to speak, view the circle of reality from a point at the circumference and not from the center. If we could survey the world from the center we should see more, the field of observation would be wider than is possible for us when located in the

circumference. There is more in reality than is revealed through our modes of perception and thought, and if we could live the life of the Absolute, all the rough edges of experience would be smoothed and all its blanks filled up. The singleness of comprehension in which the differences of centers of experience are at once preserved and annulled, the continuity of interpenetration of its integral components, the intuitive perception of the meaning of the whole in each part and of the fulfilment of the part in the whole, the complete harmony of the universals of thought with the particulars of experience which must characterize the Absolute, are only an ideal for us and *our* type of consciousness, however much it may adumbrate the Absolute, can only be regarded as the germ of which the latter is the full development. The ultimate *form* of all reality, self-consciousness, is indeed in us, but the *content* of our consciousness though a part of the whole is not the whole. The categories are only partial views of a reality which they sketch but do not paint.

If it is impossible to equate the content of the Absolute consciousness with nature,

it is equally impossible to set up a barrier between the intelligible world and the sensible world. If the noumenon excluded the world of our experience, we, living in this world, could not even think of the noumenon; and if we *do* think of the noumenon, it is because we are related to the principle of which the phenomenal world is an integral element. A noumenon that includes the phenomenal world within itself would be *more* of a noumenon than one which does not. The Absolute is, no doubt, a self, but it is a self which is manifested in an infinite number of ways in an infinite number of things. It is a whole which is completely and indivisibly present in each particular thing, in virtue of which all things are also perfect selves and form a unity of system, and through these selves is bound up with and constitutes the essence of finite selves. It is for this reason that in each act of cognition we are in touch with the whole and mean the whole. As organically related to the infinite, we are *in form* infinite, and this is the reason why at every step the process of our cognition is guided, implicitly or explicitly, by the idea of the whole. But *in content*

what we know forms only an element of the total wealth of the Absolute consciousness. The categories of our thought and the matter of our perception enable us to comprehend some aspects of the portion of reality with which we have specially to deal during this life, and are in this sense subjective. They neither constitute the whole content of the Absolute nor screen the intelligible world from our view. They truly define, not the Absolute life as lived by the Absolute, but certain modes of its manifestation and are valid so far as they go. With the growth of our mind other aspects of the Absolute reality may come within the purview of our knowledge, for the proper interpretation of which other categories than we have at our disposal at present will, no doubt, be needed. This, however, does not mean that the categories which serve us at the present level of our experience will then be invalidated, but that they will become absorbed and transformed into others, richer and more adequate. But at each stage of its development the finite self is a whole and, as such, is in indivisible union with the complete whole.

Speculative idealism has been adversely criticized in recent times on the ground that it renders change and evolution unmeaning and makes genuine novelties impossible. It is supposed to take all life and movement away from the world and to reduce it to a static, timeless, block universe. But to say that the Absolute as an all-inclusive whole does not itself change is not to deny that it is realized in and through the successive events of flowing time. Surely, to maintain that the world as a whole is not an event at a particular moment of time is not tantamount to affirming that events do not occur and are not comprised within the unity of the Absolute. One may go the whole length with the apostles of time and change without forgetting that the presupposition of the temporal order is an eternal order which contains change as a necessary element of itself. The Absolute is timeless only in the sense that it knows the whole of time all at once, and this presupposes the occurrence of change. Just as a man who intelligently carries out a day's plan of work has all along the whole plan in view even though he realizes it step by step in the

course of the day, so the Absolute eternally knows the meaning of the world drama progressively unfolded in time. M. Bergson has made himself the champion of a continuously flowing time, of what he calls *durée réelle* which "is the continuous progress of the past which gnaws into the future and which swells as it advances." This is simply to emphasize one-sidedly the continuity of time at the expense of its discreteness. Time is not simply a continuous flow any more than it is a mere sum of discrete moments. M. Bergson commits the mistake of separating continuity from discreteness. As for the view that the movement of time is not towards any goal nor guided by any purpose, the apparent plausibility which it has arises from the fact that finite beings like us are often unable to discern the trend of events or to discover their meaning. But to infer from this that the flow of reality is not determined by any final purpose is like arguing that because the hearer may not know what the speaker is driving at, the speaker himself is ignorant of it. It is not easy to say what exactly in M. Bergson's view the ultimate reality is. Only this we know with certainty,

that it is in a state of ceaseless and continuous flux. But an aimless flux, a becoming without an end, is an altogether irrational conception.

It must, however, be admitted that the conception of the Absolute as apprehending the whole of time in one glance, as it were, is not wholly free from difficulties. There still remains the puzzle, how an unending series in which there is neither a first nor a last event can be completed even for the Absolute insight. The only solution would seem to be that the Absolute has a form of consciousness in which time is superseded without being annulled. As Professor Pringle-Pattison says: "The time process is retained in the Absolute and yet transcended. Retained in some form it must be, if our life experience is not to be deprived of all meaning and value. The temporal process is not simply non-existent from the Absolute point of view."[1] But "although the experience and the relations of time must be represented in the infinite experience this must be in a way which transcends our human perspective." How precisely

[1] *The Idea of God in the Light of Recent Philosophy*, p. 363.

the eternal order exists for the Absolute it is not possible for us to say.

As for the objection that genuine novelties and progress in time are incompatible with monistic idealism, it rests upon the preconception that the Absolute is complete *without* the finite selves and their life history. James who urges this objection with great force himself suggests the answer. Finite minds, he points out, may be regarded not as useless repetitions of what the Absolute already contains but as constituents, organic members of it. But after making the suggestion he runs away from it with the remark that this is " employing pluralistic weapons and thereby giving up the Absolutist case." But has the Absolutist, who understands his business, ever fought shy of plurality ? Has it ever been his contention that the Absolute exists apart from the activities and struggles, the joys and sorrows, the successes and failures of finite lives ? " The one will of God," Royce, for example, tells us, " is expressed through the many individual wills ;.....simple unity is a mere impossibility. God cannot be one except by being many. Nor can we various

selves be many unless in Him we are One."[1] It is true that human selves are fragmentary expressions of the perfect selves of which the Absolute is the unity, but this does not mean that they are mere imperfect copies of them. The finite self comes from the Absolute, owes its existence to the self-limitation of the Absolute, but by reason of this it acquires a new meaning and value and is never a superfluous repetition of what already is. It, no doubt, draws the materials of its life from the infinite riches of the Absolute thought and experience, but once detached from the Absolute it, while resting securely in it, sets up its own household and contributes its own humble but unique share to the total meaning of the Absolute life. As an element of the whole, it has its appointed place in it, which cannot remain vacant and must be filled in due time. What that place is the Absolute eternally knows. Just as the contents of the finite consciousness, as supplemented in God, get a new significance, so the finite emanating from the infinite becomes a fresh individual with its own distinctive meaning.

[1] *The World and the Individual*, Vol. II, p. 331.

The Absolute as an individualized system of the perfect selves into which it is differentiated for the realization of its own purpose, expresses itself in the finite selves, and through the life-processes of these selves, their varied experiences, coöperative activities and progressive achievements, of which history is the record, returns, in man's religious consciousness and in his philosophical knowledge, into itself. As such it is the Absolute Spirit.

Professor Ward's Gifford Lectures[1]

(*Madras Christian College Magazine, January, 1901.*)

The Gifford lectures delivered by Professor Ward before the University of Aberdeen are a very remarkable production. They show how the idealistic view of the universe is steadily gaining ground amongst the foremost thinkers of the day. Oxford has long been known as the stronghold of idealism. The most prominent exponents of that philosophical theory in modern times—men like Green and Caird, Bradley and Wallace—are all connected with the University of Oxford. But in Professor Ward's *Naturalism and Agnosticism*, we have the contribution of Cambridge to idealistic philosophy. It is not that such a mode of thinking is altogether novel in Cambridge. The Cambridge Platonists, who

[1] *Naturalism and Agnosticism.* The Gifford Lectures delivered before the University of Aberdeen in the years 1896-98. By James Ward, Sc.D., Hon. LL.D., Edin., Professor of Mental Philosophy and Logic in the University of Cambridge. In two volumes. London: Adam and Charles Black, 1899. Pp. 302; 283.

occupy an important place in the history of philosophy, were idealists in the main. Professor Ward has only revived an ancient tradition of Cambridge in the domain of philosophy. But though the theory itself is not new in that ancient seat of learning, Professor Ward's exposition of it is as novel as it is masterly and suggestive. The chief defect of his treatment of the subject is that it is more critical than constructive. The charge is often brought against the idealists of the Hegelian school that they are more fond of criticising the theories to which they are opposed than careful to expound their own. It is much to be regretted that Professor Ward should have laid himself open to the same charge. The bulk of his book is taken up with the criticism of Naturalism and Agnosticism, and his own views are more suggested than systematically worked out. Of course it was necessary to clear the ground by exposing the unsoundness of "certain assumptions of modern science which have led to a widespread, but more or less tacit, rejection of Idealistic views of the world." But as the reader wends his way through these two volumes, he cannot help

feeling that the critical part of the author's work might with advantage have been curtailed and more attention paid to the elaboration of his positive conclusions. A feature of Professor Ward's book is the large space which he has devoted to the examination of the mechanical theory of the world propounded by the leading scientific teachers of the day. He is not content, as philosophers usually are, with merely discussing the categories tacitly assumed by scientific men, but has boldly and vigorously attacked what he calls the real principles of Naturalism. The utter absurdity of the mechanical theory which our scientific teachers ask us to accept as gospel truth has been fully demonstrated, and the conclusion is reached that "it is only in terms of mind that we can understand the unity, activity, and regularity that nature presents. In so understanding we see that nature is spirit." In this article, I propose to give, in my own way, a very general account of Professor Ward's book, with some reflections which it suggests. Readers who wish to profit by the inspiring teachings of Professor Ward must go to the book itself.

One of the leading characteristics of the great century which has just come to a close is the wonderful progress which physical science has made. All departments of nature have been explored more or less, and she has been forced to yield up a good many of her secrets. But the increase of knowledge of the laws of the material world has been accompanied by a hostility to all teleological interpretation of it. Such, however, was not the attitude of one of the greatest founders of modern science, Sir Isaac Newton. "The whole diversity of natural things," says he, "can have arisen from nothing but the will of one necessarily existing being who is always and everywhere God supreme, infinite, omnipotent, omniscient, absolutely perfect." But "a little more than a hundred years later Laplace began to publish his *Mecanique Celeste*, which may be described as an extension of Newton's *Principia* on Newton's lines, translated into the language of the differential calculus. When Laplace went to make a formal presentation of his work to Napoleon, the latter remarked: 'M. Laplace, they tell me you have written this large book on the system

of the universe and have never even mentioned its creator.' Whereupon Laplace drew himself up and answered bluntly: 'Sire, I had no need of any such hypothesis.' Since that interview another century has almost passed. Sciences that were then in their infancy have in the meanwhile attained imposing proportions. Any one who may now have the curiosity to compare the treatises of their best attested exponents will find that work no longer singular in the omission which Napoleon found so remarkable." In short, modern science views the universe as if it were godless, and thinks that it has no need whatever to introduce teleological principles in prosecuting its special inquiries.

What, then, is the theory of the universe that science has to offer? Legitimately it has no right at all to offer any theories. Its proper business is to trace out the relations between natural phenomena, handing over all ultimate problems to philosophy for solution. This is undoubtedly the position of the wisest of scientific men. But there are some who confuse natural science with philosophy and suppose that the *relative* conceptions of science have *absolute*

validity. Naturalism is the outcome of this confusion. It abstracts from nature all elements which make the universe a living whole and reduces it to a mere machine. In the first place, it separates the objective world from the subject in relation to which alone it is real. Regarding the material world as a *res completa* it seeks to explain it independently of mind. But the consequence of making a false abstraction is soon felt. It is discovered that such sensible qualities as colour, sound, smell, etc., have reality only in relation to mind. If the external world is independent of mind, it cannot obviously be credited with these sensible qualities. They, therefore, must go. What are called primary qualities—extension, figure, hardness, and so forth—alone remain. It does not require much reflection to find out that apart from mind substantiality and causality have no meaning. These, too, must disappear along with the sensible qualities. What, then, remains? Only mass and motion. If the universe is to be explained at all, it must be explained in terms of mass and motion. It is thus that modern science has come to regard the material universe as a system

of mass-points in perpetual motion. It is instructive to note the successive steps in the chain of reasoning which leads to such a conception. The beginning is made with pure mechanics, which "is in the strictest sense an exact science based entirely on certain fundamental assumptions and definitions. We have here rigorous calculation, but no measurement: ideas but not facts." The abstract ideas of pure mechanics are next applied to concrete realities, and no cognizance is taken of substance and cause. The investigation of the concrete properties of things is handed on to experimental physics. Molar mechanics abstracts from objects their sensible qualities and considers them simply as mass and motion. Mathematical physicists carry their abstraction much further than this. They imagine that just as the universe is a system of matter and motion, so the sensible masses themselves are nothing but configurations of insensible molecules in perpetual motion. The mechanical principles, it is believed, "would apply on any scale, however great or small." "So we come by the general hypothesis of molecular physics that all physical phenomena

—however complete, however ultimate, however numerous, their qualitative diversities may be, and remain, for our perception—can still be shown to correspond to, and to be summed up by purely dynamical equations, such equations describing the configurations and motions of a system of masses called molecules for their minuteness. In other words, the hypothesis of molecular physics is that all the qualitative variety of the external world can be resolved into quantitative relations of time, space, and mass, that is, of mass and motion."

How are the insensible molecules to be conceived? Scientific men are by no means unanimous in the answer which they give to this question. Newton believed them to be solid impenetrable particles. According to Boscovitch, they are centres of force. Lord Kelvin conceives of them as vortex rings in a perfectly homogeneous and frictionless fluid. What are known to us as moving masses are simply the movements of these rings through the fluid. Lord Kelvin's theory reduces ponderable matter to what Professor Ward calls "non-matter in motion." Professors Tait and Balfour Stewart,

however, think that the purpose for which Lord Kelvin's hypothesis is framed is fully met if we conceive of the ethereal fluid not as *absolutely* but as *indefinitely* perfect.

The net result of the mechanical theory, then, is that it reduces the living universe, full of variety and colour and the very opposite of a dead machine, to the movements and stress of insensible molecules. It reduces the concrete to the abstract, the living to the dead; in one word, the higher to the lower. Now, it may at once be admitted that as a *description* of the simplest aspects of the universe, the mechanical theory has perfect validity. But when it is offered as the ultimate theory of reality it becomes absurd. In Mr. Bradley's pointed language, we may say that when mechanism "loses its head and, becoming blatant, steps forward as a theory of first principles, then it is really not respectable. The best that can be said of its pretensions is that they are ridiculous." [1] The fact is that a distinction must be drawn between the mechanical theory as science and as philosophy. The former is quite legitimate,

[1] *Appearance and Reality*, 1st ed., p. 126.

but the latter is unmitigated nonsense. It is one thing to show that the sensible properties of things *depend* upon certain molecular movements and quite another to argue that they *are* molecular movements and nothing else. Quantity, no doubt, is so connected with quality that variations in quantitative relations bring about qualitative changes. But it does not follow from this that quality is identical with quantity. It is strange that this simple truth is overlooked by the advocates of the mechanical theory. We can very well understand the movements of the particles *of* sensible bodies, but what are the particles *apart* from the bodies and their qualities? Divested of sensible qualities, the atoms of our scientific men are simply figments of the imagination. They are real only as conceivable elements of cognizable things, but independently of the things they have no substantive existence. In utter disregard of this simple truth, which is so obvious to every unsophisticated mind, we are assured by our scientific teachers that the qualities of objects, without which the objects would not be what they are, are the *effects* of the movements and stress of

imperceptible molecules. One wonders by what faculty they manage to know things which can neither be seen, nor touched, nor heard, nor smelled, nor tasted. "All this," as Professor Ward humorously remarks, "reminds one of Alice's *Adventures in Wonderland*. The Cheshire cat, on a certain occasion, vanished quite slowly, beginning with the end of the tail and ending with the grin, which remained some time after the rest of it had gone. 'Well! I have often seen a cat without a grin,' thought Alice, 'but a grin without a cat! It is the most curious thing I ever saw in my life.'" Now in the mechanical theory, which is so fashionable in certain quarters now-a-days, we have something very like a grin without a cat. It must not be supposed, however, that the conclusion to be drawn from our argument is that the atoms are unreal. The contention rather is that they are *more* real than the doctors of science make them out to be. As an aspect of the concrete whole —the universe of matter *and* mind—they are real, but as moving mass-points devoid of qualities they belong to Wonderland as much as a grin without a cat. For purposes of scientific

exposition, such abstractions are, no doubt, permissible; but care must be taken not to confound them with reality. Molecular mechanics does not give us an account of things as they truly are and behave with one another, but merely describes them *in so far as they are mass and motion.*

The mechanical theory, if it is to make good its claim to give a satisfactory explanation of the universe, must not be content with merely reducing it to molecules and motion, but must show how the world of mind and matter is developed out of them. If, as Laplace assured Napoleon, it has no need of the hypothesis of Divine control and guidance, it is bound to show that the configurations and motions of insensible mass-points are quite enough to account for not only inorganic and organic objects, but also for such things as science and art, morality and religion. How magnificent is the philosophic dreamer's vision of the dance of atoms gradually growing so mazy as at last to produce the theory through the medium of a particular configuration of them —say, Mr. Spencer's brain—that everything in the universe is evolved out of mass and motion!

In justice to some of the most eminent physicists of the day, it must be said that they are far too wise to countenance any such absurdity. Lord Kelvin, for example, is explicit in declaring that "the only contribution of dynamics to theoretical biology is absolute negation of automatic commencement or automatic maintenance of life." J. S. Mill, in his *Logic*, affirms that the laws of matter can explain all the phenomena of nature, only if certain primitive collocations of matter be presupposed. This only brings in teleology under another name. There is one thinker, however, who is not daunted by any enterprise however bold, who eagerly undertakes a task from which more cautious men shrink, and who mistakes his dogmatic assertions for axiomatic principles. It is Mr. Herbert Spencer. He has made it the special mission of his life to exhibit the process of the evolution of the universe from the nebula to man and his latest achievements. The enterprise is grand, and it would be the eighth wonder of the world if it could be successfully accomplished. But in the whole history of philosophy there is nothing more pathetic than the lamentable fact that the

imposing superstructure of the 'Synthetic Philosophy completed by Mr. Spencer after many years' labour turns out to be founded upon a quicksand. Those who wish to satisfy themselves that it is so should carefully read Professor Ward's book. I have space to touch upon one or two points only.

The most noticeable feature of Mr. Spencer's theory of evolution is that it begins at a point which is altogether beyond the scope of physical analysis and ends with the highest developments of mind. Evolution is supposed to begin with an absolutely homogeneous and incoherent state of matter. If we ask how heterogeneity arises out of absolute homogeneity, we are told that the absolutely homogeneous is unstable and must therefore "lose its equilibrium and the relatively homogeneous must lapse into the relatively less homogeneous." Professor Ward rightly points out that it is by no means self-evident that homogeneity implies instability. It is a gratuitous assumption made by Mr. Spencer to make progress possible. "Homogeneity is not necessarily instability. Quite otherwise. If the homogeneity be absolute, then the stability will

be absolute too. In other words, if 'the indefinite, incoherent homogeneity' in which, according to Mr. Spencer, some re-arrangement *must result*, be a state devoid of all qualitative diversity and without assignable bounds, then any re-arrangement can result only from external interference; it cannot begin from within. All physicists are agreed, as Messrs. Tait and Stewart put it, that 'in the production of the atoms from a perfect fluid we are driven at once to the unconditioned—to the great First Cause; it is, in fine, an act of creation and not of development.' Thus the very first step in Mr. Spencer's evolution seems to necessitate a breach of continuity. This fatal defect is not apparent in his exposition; but only because the whole vast problem of molecular development is lost in the haziness of the nebular theory and is slurred over by the vagueness of such terms as 'indefinite, incoherent homogeneity.'" Another ugly breach of continuity occurs when Mr. Spencer has to cross the boundary line between inorganic matter and organic things. He is quite confident that life is evolved out of what is below it in the scale of development, but he does nothing

to prove that it is so, and has, as Professor Ward puts it, "blandly to confess that two volumes of his Synthetic Philosophy are missing, the two volumes that should connect inorganic with biological evolution." The fact is that as he begins with an unreal abstraction, it is logically impossible for him to get forward. The progress which he seems to make is utterly illusory, and the transition from the earlier stage of evolution to the later one is only possible by the surreptitious introduction of what is ostentatiously ignored. The utter futility of Mr. Spencer's philosophical method is best seen if we compare it with that of a thinker who possessed genuine philosophical insight, Hegel. Hegel, like Mr. Spencer, begins with an empty abstraction, Pure Being; but how different is his procedure! He begins with the thinnest abstraction, not to *deduce* more concrete categories from it, but to prove that it *presupposes* them. Pure Being, taken by itself, amounts to pure nothing and is real only as an element of a higher category. The lower categories always imply the higher ones, and if philosophy begins with them at all, it is only to show that the *truth* of them lies in

the highest and the most concrete category. For Hegel the highest reality is the absolute subject-object. It is with this that he really begins and it is with this that he ends. The concrete universe of matter and mind—a universe in which what is called matter is the eternal *object* of the central principle of it, self-conscious mind —is the only true reality. It is absurd to talk of its beginning or end. Philosophy can survey the concrete world and arrange the various phases of it in an ascending order of complexity and value; but it is bound to accept these as they are and must not seek to go behind them. Its proper task is to demonstrate the dependence of the lower and less complex elements of the whole upon the higher and more complex ones. In other words, it has to show that the universe has no reality apart from an absolute self-conscious principle and is the manifestation of it. Mr. Spencer, on the other hand, makes that which is primary, secondary ; abstracts from all the concrete facts which alone make the universe real, and pretends to *derive* the higher from the lower. As a matter of fact, he does nothing of the kind. His *modus operandi* is no better than

that of the conjurer who by dexterous sleight of hand appears to produce something out of nothing. Those who cannot detect the trick think how clever he must be. Mr. Spencer's attempt to explain celestial bodies, organisms, societies, science, art, etc., in terms of matter, motion, and force is, as Professor Ward says, very like "trying to find the meaning of a book by first distributing the type and then mincing them up into strokes and dots." Professor Ward justly contends that all this is only conjuring and not philosophising. If you choose to make an abstraction your starting-point, you must remain there. Not a single step in advance is logically possible for you.

Mr. Spencer's conception of the evolution of the universe, in spite of its apparent grandeur, is altogether absurd. "There is," says he, "an *alternation* of evolution and dissolution in the totality of things." Now the totality of things—the universe—is not an object of experience at all in the sense in which a planet or even a solar system is an object of experience. The universe is a whole of inter-related parts and that which can be predicated of the parts

of it cannot be predicated of it as a whole. The attempt to do so gives rise to various 'antinomies' long since exposed by Kant. "On what grounds," asks Professor Ward very pertinently, "is it assumed that the universe was ever evolved at all? A given man, a given nation, a given continent, a given sidereal system, as particular objects, have their several finite histories of birth and death, upheaval and subsidence. But growth and decay, rise and decline, elevation and degradation, evolution and dissolution are everywhere contemporaneous. We have but to extend our range to find a permanent totality made up of transient individuals in every stage of change." There is really no reason why we should believe that the universe as a totality is first evolved and then dissolved except that Mr. Spencer dogmatises that "any account which begins with it in a concrete form and leaves off with it in a concrete form is incomplete." But what justification is there for the supposition that the method which is adequate for explaining the part is also adequate for explaining the whole? *Within* a given whole there may be growth and decay, but *in* the

whole there is absolutely no change. One side of the see-saw goes up while the other side comes down, but the see-saw itself neither ascends nor descends ; so evolutions and dissolutions may take place *within* the universe, but it is quite meaningless to say that the universe itself either evolves or dissolves. "The telescope and the spectroscope," to quote Professor Ward, "tell us of stars and nebulæ in every phase of advance or decline to be found in every quarter of the heavens. To ask which was first, solid masses or nebulous haze, is much like asking which was first, the hen or the egg, and like that famous problem, may lead us to conclude—neither the one nor the other." Besides, it should be remembered that neither in science nor in philosophy is there any reason to conclude that the material universe is a complete whole. The distinguished authors of the *Unseen Universe* believe that the material world is only a part and perhaps an insignificant part of the true universe, and this is a conclusion to which many important considerations seem to point. Mr. Spencer's application of the conception of evolution to the totality of things is

only an instance of the absurdities to which his dogmatic method leads.

Mr. Spencer never stops to reflect that apart from teleological factors, evolution is as meaningless as the play of *Hamlet* with the part of Hamlet left out. Hegel was as great a believer in evolution as Mr. Spencer; but, in his system, it means the progressive revelation of the absolute in nature and in history, especially in the latter. Within the limits of science, it is in Biology that the most fruitful application of the evolutionary principle has been made. None of the great thinkers whose names are associated with evolution are so extravagant in dealing with it as Mr. Spencer. Darwin, for example, does not think that the problem of the origin of life can be solved by it. All that he attempts to do is to show how the higher species are evolved out of the lower through what he calls natural selection of animals so differentiated as to become better adapted to their environment; or, in other words, more fitted to carry on the struggle for existence. The result of the accumulation of small variations is that in course of time a new species comes into existence. As to

the how and the why of variations, Darwin has no definite theory to offer. But the older Darwin grew the more was he disposed to admit the importance of the teleological factors recognised by his predecessor Lamarck. In a letter to Professor Fiske, quoted by Professor Ward he speaks thus of Mr. Spencer's work : " Such parts of H. Spencer as I have read with care impress my mind with the idea of his inexhaustible wealth of suggestion, but never convince me ; and so I find it with some others. I believe the cause to be the frequency with which I have found first-formed theories erroneous." Mr. A. R. Wallace, the great associate of Darwin in the establishment of the theory of biological evolution, frankly confesses that natural selection is powerless to explain the intellectual and moral nature of man. In the article on evolution in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Professor Sully gives the following account of his views : " Mr. A. R. Wallace, who shares with Darwin the honour of establishing the doctrine of natural selection, differs from the latter in setting much narrower limits to the action of this cause in the mental as well as in the physical

domain. Thus he would mark off the human faculty of making abstractions, such as space and time, as powers which could not have been evolved in this way. Mr. Wallace leans to the teleological idea of some superior principle which has guided man in his upward path as well as controlled the whole process of organic evolution. This law is connected with the absolute origin of life and organization." The truth is that evolution without the guidance of mind is a chimera. Conceive of the universe as the self-revelation of the eternal spirit, realise that its reality depends upon an indwelling principle which controls and regulates all its processes and evolution becomes intelligible. Properly understood it means the progressive realisation of God in the processes of nature and in human history. But abstract from reason which is immanent in nature, ignore the supreme principle of the universe without which nothing is, and evolution is an empty dream, a mere fable, a will-o-the-wisp to lead astray unwary thinkers.

The mechanical theory, which cannot give a satisfactory explanation of even the inorganic world, utterly breaks down when it has to deal

with the relation between mind and body. The mind, which it begins by ignoring, becomes the source of its greatest difficulty. Everything in heaven and earth must according to its principles be explained in terms of matter and motion; but unfortunately for it, it finds that mind stubbornly refuses to come under its rubrics. It, therefore, is driven to declare that between mind and body there is really no connection and that mental phenomena are simply the concomitants of certain processes of the brain. The body, we are assured, is but a machine for the explanation of which mechanical principles are quite sufficient. All *bodily* phenomena are causally connected with one another as much as the phenomena of nature, but with them mind has absolutely nothing to do. In short, what we find, say the protagonists of the mechanical theory, is that two utterly disparate series of phenomena, the mental and the physical—are somehow or other constantly conjoined in the wonderful machine we call man; but between the one and the other there is a wide gulf which can in no way be bridged over. In spite of the alleged absence of connection between mental

phenomena on the one hand and physical phenomena on the other, it is not denied but vehemently asserted that there is a constant conjunction between the two. Now, as Professor Ward points out, there may be occasional coincidences between absolutely independent groups of things, but "constant parallelism *plus* absolute separation is logically so unstable a combination that of necessity one or other term must be dropped."

According to mechanism, then, mind has no substantive existence of its own. It is an inexplicable appendage—and a very inconvenient one, to be sure!—of brain processes. It has no more control over body than shadow has over substance. But how is it that this unwelcome intruder, this mere shadow, or epiphenomenon, as it is called, comes to think that it can control and regulate the body? How is it that being a shadow only, it does not at all appear to be a shadow, but behaves as if it possessed spontaneity and activity? What man is there in the world who does not believe that he controls and is not controlled by matter, who does not form plans of different kinds in his mind and

perform movements in carrying them out, who does not think that he is a free agent and not a mere bundle of sensations and feelings mysteriously accompanying molecular movements in the brain? Of course we are told that all this is illusion merely. But what a marvellous illusion it is! Is there any wonder in this wide world which can at all be compared with it? How is it possible for such a strange illusion to arise? There is no spontaneity and activity in the material world, nor do they exist in mind. Whence, then, does the illusion come? "When," observes Professor Ward, "it was a question whether the sun or the earth was to be regarded as fixed, it was plain that one or other moved; but would it ever have been maintained that the motion of one of them was illusory, if both had been still? Once grasp the notion that the material world is wholly devoid of activity, and that there is no real activity in that mental world which is but its shadowy accompaniment, and there can be no question of '*banishing* spontaneity,' no call to explain *away* the illusion of being 'up and doing.' We cannot banish the non-existent, or expose a counterfeit of what,

as genuine, is unknowable and inconceivable. Paradoxical though it may seem, yet even the illusion of activity and spontaneity is certain evidence that activity and spontaneity somehow really exist; and since by common consent they are not found in the physical world, they must be in the psychical." If, in short, the mind were really what we are assured it is by the advocates of the conscious automaton theory, there would not be the possibility of even the illusion of spontaneity and activity, and if these things seem to exist, what is proved is not that they are illusory but that they are real.

The moral to be drawn from the failure of the mechanical theory even when it is bolstered up by the doctrine of evolution, as in Mr. Spencer's system, is that any attempt to explain the universe by eliminating mind from it is hopeless. Many a philosophical theory has come to grief simply because it has overlooked the cardinal truth that mind and matter, or rather subject and object, are correlated elements of a concrete whole. Owing to the failure to grasp this fundamental principle, the absurd attempt has been made again and again to explain the

higher in terms of the lower. The right method is precisely the opposite. We can interpret the nature of a thing if we view it in the light of what is higher than it in the scale of being; but if we reverse the method, if instead of seeking the explanation of the lower in the higher, we do just the opposite, we only deceive ourselves and mislead others. It is mind that explains matter and not matter that explains mind. The higher reality includes within itself what is lower than it. It is for this reason that we find it possible to abstract from the higher reality and to suppose that what remains is the whole. The careless thinker finds it easy to view the physical world as if it were a *res completa* and rushes straight to the conclusion that it *is* a *res completa*. We might as well conclude that because we can *distinguish* the inside of a thing from its outside, therefore the two sides *exist* independently of each other. We must, however, resist the tendency to make such abstractions, if we are anxious to avoid the pitfalls of erroneous thinking. The organic unity of subject and object must constantly be borne in mind. The true philosopher is he who does

not ignore it, but begins by recognising it as the corner-stone of reality and, therefore, the supreme organising principle of experience. Once miss this cardinal truth and you are doomed to wander for ever in the wilderness of pseudo-philosophy.

Science is constantly appealing to experience, and let us go to experience. What we find is, as Professor Ward puts it, not a *dualism* of matter and mind, but a *duality* of subject and object *within* the unity of experience. We can never transcend the unity-in-duality which all experience is. "We know the object," says the Master of Balliol, "only as we bring it back to the unity of the self ; we know the subject only as we realise it in the object." Reality is one, and that reality is concrete experience within which the relative distinction of subject and object falls. The attempt to go beyond the all-inclusive circle of experience is preposterous. We have seen that the result of ignoring the essential correlativity of the objective world to mind is that we are logically compelled to strip off one after another all the sensible qualities of things till nothing remains but mass-points

and their movements. These, however, are nothing but empty abstractions, though our scientific teachers assure us that they are the veritable realities behind the veil of appearance! A grin without a cat! Those who do not feel quite at home in this fairyland must be on their guard against treading the path which leads straight to it. The dependence of the material world on mind must, on no account, be forgotten. In order to accomplish its task it is no doubt necessary for science to treat the physical world as if it were independent of spirit. "But," as Professor Ward says, "we have a right to demand that what is thus left out shall not be ignored and the bare anatomy of its body offered us as the living universe itself." How smooth would be the path of philosophy if its self-created difficulties were removed! The objective world is quite arbitrarily separated from mind which gives reality to it and the result is that the puzzling question arises how two such disparate entities as mind and matter ever come into connexion with each other. For the physicist the difficulty is to explain the origin of life. For the psychologist the difficulty is

to explain how mind can know matter. Those who are acquainted with the history of philosophy know how philosopher after philosopher has attempted to solve the problem without success. No wonder that it is so. If you wrongly disjoin the inseparable elements of a concrete whole, you can never bring them together again. Subject and object, mind and matter, the knower and the known, *exist only through their mutual relation*. Separate the one from the other and there is nothing.

My object in this paper is not criticism but appreciation of the leading ideas of Professor Ward's book. There are many points of detail to which exception might be taken; but I have purposely abstained from the uncongenial work of criticising a thinker with whose main doctrine I am in most cordial agreement. There is one point, however, on which I would offer a few remarks. Speaking on the conception of nature as a system of laws, Professor Ward asks, "What of the conception itself of this systematic unity and invariable conformity to law?" This, he answers, "is teleological, is a means to the end, knowledge itself. It is of the nature

of a hypothesis or postulate but it is not an axiom, which it would be absurd to deny; it is not in itself self-evident, nor is it a deduction from anything self-evident. Nor again is it so much brute fact thrust upon us willy nilly .... the conception of nature as a system of laws is, we must say, hypothetical; since it is not self-evident, but admits of question and awaits verification. But it is an indispensable hypothesis or postulate; for without it scientific experience is impossible." Now it is an obvious truth that the ideal of systematic unity is not realised in *our finite experience*; but the very fact that such an ideal governs our cognitive processes and is tacitly presupposed in scientific knowledge proves that *ultimately* it is constitutive of experience. The regulative principles of knowledge, to use a Kantian phrase, are what they are, because in the last resort they are constitutive principles; or, to express the same idea in a different way, the ideal which from the point of view of finite experience is *to be* realised is from the point of view of universal experience already realised. The denial of the conception of the unity and uniformity of nature

does not seem to involve self-contradiction, not because it is a mere hypothesis, but because our conception of nature is, after all, exceedingly fragmentary and hardly deserves the name of knowledge at all. True knowledge, as Spinoza pointed out, consists in viewing things *sub specie eternitatis*, and when nature is so viewed, the denial of the proposition that it is a system "whose parts are wholly determined by universal laws" *does* lead us to self-contradiction. A principle of knowledge cannot be regulative without being constitutive: that which makes scientific experience possible must underlie common experience; for scientific experience is nothing but common experience more systematised and reduced to unity. Science gradually realises that nature is a system of laws, because it *is* a system of intelligible laws; the conception of the unity and uniformity of nature can be a legitimate hypothesis, because it is a *fact*. The whole truth is very forcibly expressed in the following sentences which I quote from Dr. Caird's *Evolution of Religion*:—"Every step toward the conception of the world or of any part of it as a

system, every step toward a rational view of the relation between the intelligence and the intelligible world, is a step toward the verification and, in an etymological sense, the *demonstration* of the principles of unity presupposed in the whole process. The process of knowledge is therefore at once a progressive and a regressive process. It is an advance towards a completer synthesis of the ever-increasing multiplicity of phenomena which are presented to us in experience, and at the same time it is a new return upon the principle or principles of unity which are presupposed even in the simplest perception of these phenomena. Thus every movement of scientific or philosophic synthesis, as it is the reduction of a manifold to a simple form, is the recovery of the unity of the intelligence out of the dispersion of facts; and it is therefore a practical verification of the presumption of unity involved in our first apprehension of them." [1]

This article has, I fear, grown to a considerable length, and I must now bring it to a close. I have only been able to give a very meagre sketch of Professor Ward's philosophical theory.

[1] *Evolution of Religion*, Vol. I, 1st ed., p. 157.

My object has been to draw the attention of my readers to one of the most remarkable books published in recent times rather than to give a full account of it, which cannot be done in one article. Those who may happen to cherish the delusion that science has finally banished ideal elements from nature, are specially invited to carefully study this book. No amount of investigation of the particular laws of nature can give one an insight into the principle that makes nature intelligible. "Nature," says the Master of Balliol, "must take a new aspect if it be conceived as standing in a necessary relation to spirit and not as including it. A nature so related can be no closed system of purely physical relations ; it must be conceived as part of a greater whole, and it may even be the case that in the ultimate account of it, we may have to regard it as the necessary manifestation of spirit."[1]

The ultimate explanation of the universe must be in terms of mind and not in terms of matter. One of the greatest savants of the century, who has keener insight into higher truths than most of his compeers, has recently

[1] *The Critical Philosophy of Kant*, Vol. I, p. 44.

given expression to a similar idea. In his presidential address delivered to the British Association two years ago, Sir William Crookes said:—"An eminent predecessor in this chair declared that 'by an intellectual necessity he crossed the boundary of experimental evidence, and discerned in that matter, which we in ignorance of its latent powers and notwithstanding our professed reverence for its creator, have hitherto covered with opprobrium, the promise and potency of all terrestrial life.' I should prefer to reverse the apophthegm, and to say that in life I see the promise and potency of all forms of matter." The marvellous progress of science has been one of the most striking features of the wonderful century which has just come to a close. Let us hope that the crowning achievement of the new century will be the complete vindication of the 'eternal verities' scarcely dreamt of in the materialistic science of the day.

The Natural and the Spiritual World[1]

(*Modern Review, April 1917.*)

The rigid distinction between nature and spirit, matter and mind with which the modern civilised mind is so familiar is far removed from the primitive man's way of viewing the world in which he lives and of which he forms a part. He cannot think of matter as dead and lifeless and moved by forces external to it, nor does he conceive of mind and matter as two substances different from and independent of each other. The instinctive tendency of his mind is to interpret all things after the analogy of his own self, to endow all natural objects with life and the power of spontaneous movement. He is not troubled by any problem about the relation of the natural to the spiritual, for no clear distinction between the two exists for him and yet he does not simply identify the one with the

[1] Calcutta University Extension Lecture.

other. All that exists is in his eyes more than merely material and also more than the impalpable, intangible spiritual. The animate and the inanimate, the conscious and the unconscious are instinctively apprehended by him as the twofold aspect of the same reality.

This primitive conception of reality also finds expression in the speculations of the early philosophers of Greece. Whether the original substance out of which all things arise was conceived as water, air, fire or something indeterminate, it was regarded as a living though not necessarily conscious being whose changes and determinations are due to its own spontaneous activity. For these thinkers the opposition between the living and the not living and, as a consequence, the problem of their reconciliation does not exist. No distinction is made between the natural and the supernatural and for the explanation of the cosmic order it is not found necessary to have recourse to any cause or principle different from and beyond that order. Just as the changes and movements of an animal are due not to any foreign principle but to the animal's own vitality, so the mutations

of the world are the expression of its own life. The stuff of which all things are made is eternal, uncreated, living matter. The pre-Socratic philosophers, generally speaking, do not seek to explain the natural world by referring it to a trans-mundane intelligence. It was Anaxagoras who first introduced into Greek thought the dualism of nature and spirit. He is unable to explain the world, so beautiful, so orderly, so full of design by matter, even if matter be conceived as living. It can only be the work of a being who is intelligent and whose power extends over all things, the work of a rational principle independent of and unmixed with anything else. The clear distinction between matter and mind is the keynote of the thought of Anaxagoras. Mind is incorporeal and simple while matter is compound, a mass of the constituent elements of all things. But though Anaxagoras conceives of mind as other than matter and as the explanatory principle of its orderliness, he does not think that matter is the creation of or dependent for its existence on mind. He is very far indeed from the idealistic view of the material universe as the manifestation

of mind. By the proclamation of mind as the explanatory principle of the physical world, all that he means is that mind is the first cause that sets up the movement by which substances mingled together in the original medley are separated from one another. After having started this movement, mind does not interfere with the subsequent course of the world. Anaxagoras, therefore, is justly censured by both Plato and Aristotle for not making use of his newly discovered principle for a teleological explanation of the word.

The first great thinker of Europe who with clear vision sought to make Reason the explanatory principle of the universe and thus laid the foundations of genuine idealism is Plato. It is in his system that we find for the first time a clear distinction drawn between the sensible world and the ideal world. The world of matter and the world of supersensible ideas are sharply opposed to each other and so far as this is the case Plato's philosophy is dualistic. Indeed we may say that the Platonic philosophy, in spite of its vindication of idealism which must always remain classical, is also largely responsible for the

introduction of the dualistic mode of thought into European philosophy. The phenomenal world, to be born into which is a misfortune, is a very inferior world opposed fundamentally to the intelligible world above and beyond it. But at the same time Plato conceives of the material universe as the reflection of the world of ideas, pervaded and sustained by it and apart from which it has no being. The ideas are the universals of thought presupposed in the cognition of the particulars of sense and cannot, therefore, be derived from the latter by a process of generalisation and abstraction. Sensations apart from their relation to and participation in the ideas would be a mere chaos incognisable by us. The ideal world is the sun that sheds its light on the dark region of sense and illumines it and thus makes it capable of apprehension. Genuine reality, therefore, belongs only to the universal notions which are not mere subjective concepts but intelligible principles of reason on which subjective concepts are based. These intelligible principles, again, are not cut off from and independent of each other but are interrelated members of a single coherent system in which

an ultimate all-inclusive unity, *viz.*, the Good, finds expression. But though the phenomenal world is absolutely dependent for its knowability on its shadowing forth its noumenal background, Plato attributes to it some sort of independent being and regards the ideas as having an existence apart from it. In respect of both of these views his theory is open to serious objections. A universal that stands outside the particular is limited by it and is, therefore, not genuinely universal. The true universal is such by reason of its expression in the particular. There are passages in Plato's own writings which lend support to this view. But in spite of his suggestive treatment of the problem of the one and the many he sets up a barrier between the ideal world and the phenomenal world of differences. It is true that the ideal world is not an abstract unity but a unity of differences, but this only makes the sharp distinction between it and the manifold of perception more unintelligible. If we had bare unity on the one side and mere difference on the other, the gulf between the two would, no doubt, be profound and unbridgable, but as the Ideas are

a plurality centred in the unity of the Good, the noumena and the phenomena are not so hopelessly antagonistic to each other as to be incapable of being viewed as two opposed expressions of the same reality. In one sense the universal does indeed transcend the particular. It is expressed in each particular but is not confined to it and, therefore, goes beyond it to other particulars, thereby reducing them to a system of inter-connected things. The universal is thus prior to the particulars, but this priority is logical and not chronological. Plato's mistake lies in supposing that because the universal transcends the particulars of sense, it is also beyond them. What he fails to perceive is that the universal cannot transcend the particulars without being immanent in them. The conception of matter as a chaotic mass absolutely opposed to the Ideas is only the counterpart of the error that noumena resting in themselves and unrelated to phenomena are anything real. Before the Ideas are imposed on it, matter, according to Plato, is so indeterminate, so formless that no characterisation of it in positive terms is possible. It is something of which we

can speak only negatively. It is rescued from this state of incognisability by being brought into relation with Ideas. But if apart from relation to the Ideas, phenomena of sense are unknowable and unnameable, surely they cannot be regarded as real in any proper sense of the term. What cannot even be conceived, that to which no meaning can be attached is only a figment of the imagination. Ideas belonging to a transcendent world and not finding necessary expression in sensible phenomena and matter of which Reason is not the essence and informing principle are both false abstractions. The ideal and the real are not two opposed entities needing to be externally brought into touch with each other but two relatively opposed manifestations of an all-inclusive unity. Failing to perceive this, Plato is forced to seek for a meditating principle between phenomena and the Ideas which he finds in the world-soul. But this attempt at an external reconciliation between two things supposed to be self-subsistent and having nothing in common is foredoomed to failure. If you arbitrarily separate from each other elements of a whole which exist only

through their mutual relations, you will never be able to bring them together again any more than you can reunite into a living whole members of the body severed from each other. "The only possible escape from this logical impasse," as Caird observes, "would have been to set aside the abstract opposition of the ideal world and the world in space and time, and to substitute for it the conception that they are correlative factors in the one real world. If Plato had adopted this course, he would have done justice equally to the distinction and to the unity of these factors; and he would have avoided the opposite dangers of an abstract monism and of an irreconcilable dualism. He would have conceived the intelligible reality, or the Divine intelligence which is its central principle, not as resting in itself, but as essentially self-revealing and he would have treated the world in space and time as its necessary manifestation."

In the Philosophy of Plato, then, we no longer find that immediate identification of matter and mind which is the special feature of pre-Socratic philosophy and which is in accordance

with the natural tendency of the Greek mind. The natural world and the spiritual world are distinguished from and set in opposition to each other, though the former is conceived as permeated and supported by the latter. For all that is orderly and intelligible in it, the natural world is dependent on its being the reflection of the Ideas. Like the manifold of sense undetermined by the categories in Kant's philosophy, matter without Ideas is as good as nothing. But nevertheless matter is treated as an independent entity. The dualism of Plato, we may say, pulls itself together and asserts itself just as it tends to break down. It would have been easy for him to have recourse to a facile monism, but he is too great a thinker to minimise the obvious difference between the natural and the spiritual, the real and the ideal. Failing to rise to the standpoint from which nature and spirit are seen to be the opposed manifestations of the same Reality, he is necessarily unable to reconcile their unity with their difference.

Plato conceives of the Ideal world as the abode of higher intelligences prior to their corruption and descent into the world of phenomena.

Into it they return when they succeed in emancipating themselves from the bondage of sense. It is the heaven depicted in the *Phaedrus* in which "Zeus, the mighty lord, holding the reins of a winged chariot leads the way, ordering all and taking care of all and there follows him the array of gods and demi-gods marshalled in eleven bands; Hestia alone abides at home in the house of Heaven; of the rest they who are reckoned among the princely twelve march in their appointed order. They see many blessed sights in the inner Heaven and there are many ways to and fro, along which the blessed gods are passing, every one doing his own work; he may follow who will and can, for Jealousy has no place in the celestial choir." The spiritual world, however, cannot thus be identified with the spirit world. The abode of higher spirits, which is to them what nature is to us, must be an experienced world and an experienced world is an objective world, that in which spirit is manifested and, therefore, not the same as spirit. The mistaken identification of any world higher than this with the spiritual world is a necessary consequence of the dualism for which nature and the

intelligible world are two separate entities having no necessary relation to each other. What is other than and outside of the material universe is bound to be another reality like it, though perhaps superior to it. The spiritual world, however, is not another world beyond this but the natural world itself viewed in relation to the mind of which it is the expression. It is the universal principle of Reason of which the subject and the object are relatively opposed expressions. The dwelling place of higher spirits, if there be any such place, must be presented and, therefore, objective to thought and cannot, consequently, be different in kind from the world in which we live. It may be a better world, but it must be a continuation of and on the same footing with the physical world in both of which the Absolute Spirit is revealed. Plato seems to be half aware of this, for in the *Phoedo* the spirit world is called the upper earth and seems to be distinguished from the world of Ideas. There is a certain confusion about this matter in Plato's mind and it is not improbable that it is connected with the change that gradually took place in his conception of the Ideas. To enlarge

on this point, however, would be to go somewhat beyond the scope of this paper. Any possible upper earth into which emancipated spirits pass and from which they descend into this lower earth cannot be more spiritual than the latter. Both must be connected members of the one world in which the Supreme Intelligence manifests itself.

Aristotle developed and gave a more systematic form to the doctrines of his master and in doing so further emphasised his dualism, though, at the same time, he also indicated the idealistic line of thought by pursuing which it is possible to transcend that dualism. He opposes Plato's theory of Ideas and points out that the universal abstracted from the particular is nothing real, that the essence of things cannot be separated from the things of which it is the essence and that the ideal world is not another world independent of the phenomenal world. The universal is not before but in the individual things. The Ideas of Plato are conceived as the forms of things without which they cannot be. Form and matter are inseparable from and in indivisible union with each other. From this the legitimate

inference is that form and matter are not two different things but two aspects of the same thing. This, however, is not Aristotle's view. Form, according to him, is, no doubt, the informing principle of matter and, as such, has the higher degree of reality but it is other than matter. The original stuff of which all things are made, the common substratum of them is 'first matter,' which so far from being the necessary correlative of form is that which resists its realisation. On it all the evils and imperfections of nature depend. Aristotle's matter, therefore, is a more positive reality than Plato's and he endows it with a power of its own. But nevertheless it is enmeshed in forms all of which are included in the Divine thought. God is the supreme form related to other forms much in the same way in which the Good is related to the other Ideas in Plato's philosophy. In spite of its independent being matter is completely under the control of forms centred in God. God is the prime mover on whom the changes and movements of matter, its transition from a lower stage to a higher stage depend. The goal of all this movement and evolution is also God. The

world process, that is to say, is a process of more and more explicit realisation of forms implied in its existence from the beginning. Aristotle conceives of God as the beginning and end of all things and in so far as he does this, his philosophy is idealistic in spite of the dualism between intelligence and matter even more pronounced than in Plato.

In the philosophy of the Stoics, we find a reversion to pre-Socratic modes of thought, particularly to that of Heraclitus. It is true that the Stoics hold that Reason is the sustaining principle of the universe; all that is is the self-expression of Reason. But they are unable to think of Reason as a purely immaterial principle. The real is corporeal and ideal both at the same time. Aristotle conceives of God as the pure form divided from matter. Not so the Stoics. To them one and the same all-pervading substance is God as well as matter. The matter with which God is immediately identified is not visible matter, but a perfect, ethereal substance called pneuma. It is from this subtle and impalpable substance that the coarse matter of every-day perception is developed. This distinction,

however, does not create a gulf between God and the physical world. All that it amounts to is that while pneuma is directly divine, what we call nature is indirectly so. The Stoics have been called materialists, but they can be so characterised only from the standpoint of a dualism for which matter and mind are two independent realities absolutely opposed to each other. The Stoics, however, admit the existence of only one substance, material in one aspect and spiritual in another of which all particular objects are modifications and cannot justly be called materialists in the usual sense of the term any more than Spinoza or Schelling.

The cardinal defect of Stoicism is to lay such stress on the unity of matter and mind as to overlook their difference. A genuine monism must do justice to the unity as well as to the difference of the ideal and the real. The physical and the spiritual are one only in the sense that they are the relatively opposed manifestations of a unity which includes and goes beyond them. Mind is one with matter not directly but by overcoming the distinction which, in order to be anything real, it sets up between itself and

its own object. It opposes itself to itself and only in this way reaches the deepest unity with itself. The tendency of the Stoics is to mistake their distinction between the fiery breath and the physical world which it pervades and supports for the distinction between mind and its object ; but the pneuma is as much object as ordinary matter and both must be viewed as equally the realisation of Reason. There may be adequate reasons for thinking that there is an unseen universe from which the world in which we live is derived and of which it is a part, but the unseen universe is not the same thing as the spirit which is the constitutive principle of all that has being both seen and unseen. Any kind of refined matter is not less material and more spiritual than the matter with which we are familiar. The relation of both to intelligence is the same. Stoicism would have been a genuine advance on the dualism of Plato and Aristotle if it had succeeded in reaching an ultimate principle of unity that does not obliterate but provides a basis for the distinction between matter and mind.

The next great system of Greek thought to which we must refer for a moment is the

Philosophy of Plotinus. Neo-Platonism is a theory of emanation. The primal being from which everything is derived is the one, perfect and complete in itself and raised above all that is finite and comprehensible to us. No definition of it is possible, for to define is to limit. Though the Absolute one is independent of everything and as such excludes all determinateness that would only make it finite, Plotinus conceives of it as the source and origin of all things. How is this possible ? How can a being that needs nothing beyond itself be the explanatory principle of the world ? Plotinus is unable to give a satisfactory answer to this question and has recourse only to metaphors. The original essence is so complete, so perfect that it flows over into a lower grade of being, *viz.*, the nous. Out of the fulness of the primal being comes the intelligible world, a world of rational beings indivisibly connected with each other and having their object of thought in intelligible matter. This again, overflows into the sensible world, a grade of being inferior to it. The difference between the intelligible world and the sensible world is that while in the former the component Ideas or

thinking beings are in close transparent union with each other and are not discursive in their thought but have an unbroken intuition of the whole, in the latter the Ideas are less firmly compacted in consequence of their contact with matter. The lowest grade of being is indeterminate matter. The soul falls into the material world when it assumes a body. From the bondage of sense, however, it necessarily seeks to emancipate itself, for its home is not in the world of matter but in the higher sphere of intelligence. This it is enabled to do by living a life of asceticism and discipline. Final salvation, however, is attained only when the soul is absorbed into the Absolute and is illumined by it, when in divine rapture or ecstasy it, so to speak, swoons into the Absolute.

The only remark that it is necessary to make on this theory for our present purpose is that the worlds which constitute a hierarchy and are so related to each other that the lower emanates from the higher must be homogeneous with each other. The highest member of the series cannot be mind or something above it and the lowest, matter. The relation between intelligence and its object is not a relation between two things

on the same level. The former is the opposite of the latter, though the opposition rests upon and is made possible by a unity that transcends it. Mind and the object of mind are one not in spite of but because of their opposition. So far as the intelligible world and the sensible world are concerned Plotinus, after all, admits this principle for both of them are unities involving the duality of subject and object and are, therefore, one as well as many. But the highest member of the hierarchy is a pure undifferentiated unity and the lowest member a world of differences without unity. An arrangement like this is impossible. Worlds belonging to a series in which they are arranged in order of merit must have a common denominator. They must all be experienced and therefore, objective worlds in all of which a self-manifesting spirit is equally realised.

Greek philosophy begins with the conception of the ultimate Reality as neither purely physical nor purely spiritual but both at once. Plato and Aristotle were the first to make a clear distinction between the corporeal world and its ideal background and

though they taught that the former is supported by the latter, they failed to overcome the opposition between the two by leading them up to a higher unity manifesting itself in them. The Stoics arrived at their monism by ignoring and not by retaining and explaining the difference of mind and matter. It was, therefore, as untenable as the dualism of Plato and Aristotle. Plotinus seeks to heal the breach between the transcendent Absolute and matter by interposing middle terms between them and the only result is that he is confronted with the problem of explaining how the mediators are themselves united with the extremes which they are supposed to bring into connection with each other. We thus see that when Greek thought clearly realised the opposition of matter and spirit, it failed to attain to a point of view from which it is possible to do justice to their unity as well as to their difference.

Supernaturalism and dualism are the cardinal features of European thought during the centuries preceding the renascence. The spiritual world tenanted by immortal beings and angels is set over against the world in which we live.

Here God reigns directly and the blessed are face to face with Him. It is quite a different place from the material universe and any influence issuing forth from it operates on our plane in the form of miracles. A world so conceived, it is easy to see, is altogether a sensuous world and to call it, as consisting of mere fact, spiritual is a misuse of terms. It may be a very exalted place, but it cannot be different in kind from this earth. Any attempt to think of it inevitably leads us to portray it in much the same way as Plato does the upper earth in the *Phoedo*. "In this fair region every thing that grows, trees and flowers and fruits are fairer than any here and there are hills having stones in them smoother and more transparent and fairer in colour than our highly valued emeralds and sardonyxes and jaspers and other gems, which are but minute fragments of them: for there all the stones are like our stones and fairer still. To the animals and men there the ether is what the air is to us. The temperament of their seasons is such that they have no disease and live much longer than we do and have sights and hearing and smell and all the other senses, in far greater

perfection, in the same proportion that air is purer than water or the ether than air. Also they have temples and sacred places in which the Gods really dwell and they hear their voice and receive their answers and are conscious of them and hold converse with them; and they see the sun, moon and stars as they truly are and their other blessedness is of a piece with this." The heaven of mediæval Christianity bears some resemblance to this picture. Now I am not going to dogmatise and say that any such place is impossible. What I do affirm is that it is not a whit more spiritual than this humble abode of ours. No object of sensuous perception, not even heaven, can be ultimately real and the only thing ultimately real is the spiritual, the Absolute of which whatever exists is an embodiment or expression. The concrete whole, the All-inclusive being presupposed by every thing else is the one self-revealing spirit of which all that is real is an aspect or subordinate appearance. Both heaven and earth are in God and heaven, therefore, is not the same as God, the interjection, Good Heavens, notwithstanding.

The most typical philosophical expression of the dualistic mode of thought is perhaps, Cartesianism. Matter and mind are for it two independent substances having nothing in common and antithetical to each other. The fundamental property of the former is extension and that of the latter, thought. Any intimate connection between these opposed substances is inconceivable, but in man, at any rate, they are closely united. How this is possible Descartes is unable to explain except by invoking the aid of God. The ingenuity of the followers of Descartes was taxed to the utmost in discovering a solution of the problem, but in spite of their bold speculations well known to the student of philosophy, the problem remained unsolved. Knowledge, which is a unity involving the duality of the knower and the known, becomes inexplicable if mind and matter are regarded as two different substances repelling each other. The theory of Spinoza which reduces thought and extension to parallel attributes of the one substance does not really help us. The modes of thought and the modes of extension, in Spinoza's system, exclude each other quite as much

as the substances of Descartes and this being so, it is impossible that the former should be aware of the latter. The mind that knows its object is not merely opposed to that object but is also the unity that overreaches the opposition and makes it possible. Spinoza's modes of thought are, of course, not such a unity: they are only parallel to the modes of extension. But unless thought is conceived as a unity that transcends this parallelism knowledge remains unexplained. It is not possible to attribute such a view to Spinoza, though perhaps there are some indications of it in his theory.

Where dualism fails, onesided monism, *viz.*, the monism that does not do full justice to the duality of experience, is not more successful. It has two main forms, materialism and subjective idealism. The former seeks to reduce mind to matter which, according to it, is the one original substance. The brain secretes thought as the liver secretes bile. It is not necessary at this time of day to say anything in refutation of materialism, a philosophy worthy only of the age in which things are in the saddle and ride mankind. It has always failed to

explain how is it that mind, if it is only a by-product of matter, believes as if it were the principle that dominates and controls matter. The effective annihilator of materialism, however, is idealism from whose assaults it has never been able to protect itself. It has not been on its feet again since Bishop Berkeley laid it low some two centuries ago. As Bain tells us, "all the ingenuity of a century and half has failed to see a way out of the contradiction involved in the popular idea of matter exposed by Berkeley." But however unanswerable Berkeley's argument against materialism may be, he himself, in his positive construction, fell into a mistake equally onesided. It is true that object has no meaning apart from subject but from this it does not follow that objects are mere ideas of the mind. Reid, in his polemic against Berkeley, was quite right in insisting, as did Kant afterwards, that ideas always have an objective reference, but from this without more ado he passed straight to the conclusion that objects are, therefore, independent of the mind. Actual experience on which alone we can take our stand involves the duality but not the dualism of subject and object. If the

object apart from the subject is a meaningless abstraction, it is equally true that the subject depends for its existence upon its relation to the object. The error of materialism is to reduce the subject to the object and the error of subjective idealism, like that of Berkeley, is to reduce the object to the subject. These correlative errors bring into view the truth that Reality is subject-object and to enforce this truth is the great merit of German idealism.

Kant, on whose critiques the whole fabric of German idealism rests, was the first to show in a clear manner that objective experience is not possible apart from its relation to the unity of the self that constitutes it. The mind is not like a mirror in which the external world is simply reflected. It is the active principle which puts together the elements of experience and makes it one. Disconnected sensations are not possible objects of knowledge. They must be brought into relation to each other and reduced to unity before experience is possible and it is the self that effects this necessary synthesis. The world of experience owes its coherence and unity, without which it would be a mere chaos,

to the combining activity of the self and is, therefore, real only in relation to it. But if mind is the presupposition of nature, it, on its part, is dependent for the consciousness of its unity with itself on the process by which it constitutes and distinguishes itself from nature. The unity of the world, that is to say, is the objective counterpart of the mind's unity with itself. Self-consciousness and the consciousness of the world are two inseparable phases of the unity of experience.

In so far as Kant brings out the correlativity of the unity of self-consciousness and the objective world of experience, his position is unassailable; but his fundamental mistake is that he fails to perceive the organic character of knowledge and conceives of it as the result of the mechanical combination of elements separate from each other. If percepts without concepts are blind and concepts without percepts are empty, if the mind's consciousness of itself as a unity is dependent upon its relation to and distinction from the world and the consciousness of the world presupposes the consciousness of its reference to the self, the only legitimate conclusion is that

experience is a concrete whole of distinguishable elements incapable of being separated from each other and that subject and object are the two opposed expressions of a unity that transcends them. Kant, however, is far from such a conclusion, though his own reasoning makes it inevitable.

It is not possible to give anything like a full account of the philosophy of Kant or to form an adequate estimate of it in a paper like this. All that can be done is to indicate very briefly the line of thought which it opens up. The difficulties in which Kant becomes involved are, in the main, the outcome of the false separation between sense and understanding with which he begins. Sensations are regarded as the raw material of knowledge, which, in order to be transformed into objects of experience, must be brought under the categories of the understanding. It is impossible that subjective sensations should change their character and become objects opposed to the subject merely through the process of being united with each other by the understanding. Indeed Kant himself, in his Refutation of Idealism, insists that sensations

depend for their possibility upon their reference to objects from which the knowing mind distinguishes itself. If so, they cannot be regarded as the original data out of which the objects are developed. The presupposition of a thing cannot be dependent on that which presupposes it. What Kant's teaching in the Refutation of Idealism amounts to is that subjective experience is not anything other than objective experience but is objective experience itself regarded as the experience of the mind for which alone it is real.

Kant is never able to explain how it is possible for the understanding to reduce chaotic sensations to order if the two are alien to each other. Lawless sensations may occur in any and every order and cannot, therefore, be amenable to the forms which the understanding seeks to impose on them. That sensations should be a mere manifold wanting in every element of regular arrangement and at the same time orderly enough to conform to the categories is an impossible conception. The only way out of the difficulty is to perceive that the synthetic forms of the understanding are not superinduced upon

sensations from without but are intrinsic to them and are, therefore, the very core of their being. Sensations, that is to say, can be brought under the categories because, after all, they are not a chaotic manifold but elements of a harmonious whole. This is the view suggested in the *Critique of Judgment* which, properly developed, leads to the conception of the universe as the self-revelation of mind.

The logical outcome of the philosophy of Kant is the Absolute Idealism of Hegel, an idealism which successfully overcomes the dualism of thought and being, of matter and mind, of nature and spirit. Hegel is at one with Spinoza in thinking that ultimate being is one but conceives of this being as subject and not as substance. By subject, however, he does not mean the mere correlative of the object. If subject is the antithesis of object it is also the higher unity that overcomes this antithesis and makes it possible. It is the ideal unity, the concrete universal which opposes itself as subject to itself as object and transcends that opposition. If Reality is a connected system of things, a coherent whole of interrelated parts, it is such

only because its centre lies in mind. The complete circle of Reality has for its centre mind and for its circumference the objective world. To the unthinking mind objects are as they appear, each real on its own account independently of its relation to anything else. It does not view the world as an organic unity but as a mere aggregate of unconnected or, at any rate, not essentially connected things. This theory of the first look, to use a phrase of Mr. Bosanquet's, is corrected by science which points out that objects have being only as they are connected with each other. Nothing is isolated and self-subsistent in the universe. Whatever exists does so by virtue of the relations in which it stands to other existences which together constitute the world system. The highest generalisation of science is that the universe is a unitary system, a single whole composed of elements which cannot be parted off from one another. If this is so, it necessarily follows that the plurality of objects is the expression of an underlying unity, a unity that can only be an ideal unity. For, the reality of related substances must be sought for not in the substances

taken separately, nor in the mere aggregate of them but in the principle which divides and at the same time unites them. Such a principle is mind. The presupposition of the world as a system of reciprocally determining substances, therefore, is the universal intelligence that realises itself in them. The unity of the world, of which we hear so much, is, in the last resort, ideal unity. What is not ultimately an ideal unity is not a unity at all. The real is ideal and the ideal alone is truly real. The natural world, seen in the light of the principle of Reason implied in its existence is the spiritual world.

The element of imperishable truth in Hegel's philosophy is its conception of the unity and spirituality of the world. It knows no absolute distinction between nature and spirit, God and the world. God, Hegel is never tired of insisting, is not a mere Supreme Being. His very nature is to reveal Himself and the world is His self-revelation. But Hegel seems to regard the universe, as known to us, as the complete expression of the Absolute Mind. This does not appear to be a tenable view. The experienced world is too full of antinomies and contradictions to be

capable of being taken as the sole content of the Divine Mind. It is not sufficiently coherent for that. Coherence and comprehensiveness, as Mr. Bradley points out, go together. The more comprehensive a thing is, the more coherent and rational it is. Nature, as we know it, is not a whole completely harmonious and unless we believe that it is supplemented by elements beyond the ken of our intelligence but forming integral factors of the Divine experience, it is not possible to regard it as the revelation of God. It is true that nature becomes an irrational surd unless we think of it as the objective expression of the Divine Mind, but this does not mean that it is the complete expression of that mind. Such a view would make it even more irrational. We are unable to make anything of the grave-digger's scene, for example, in the play of Hamlet, even when it is read apart from its context, unless we suppose that it is the work of mind. The knowledge that it was written by Shakespeare explains it, but, in another way, it adds to our perplexities. Can this half crazy thing be the production of Shakespeare's mind? If it

is so, are we not led to ask whether, after all, we should not revise our idea of Shakespeare's genius ? The solution of the puzzle comes when we remember that it is only a very small part of a big drama and see it in its proper setting. Not it by itself, but it, as supplemented by more significant things that throw light on it, is the work of Shakespeare. This imperfect world in which we live is like the grave-digger's scene in Hamlet. It can be regarded as the revelation of God only if we suppose that it is a very insignificant fragment of a much larger world of which we have no knowledge. Any other supposition would amount to saying that it, as God's world, is the best possible world although everything or nearly everything in it is gravely defective. In the buoyant and cheerful days of youth it may be possible to indulge in optimism of this sort, but, I think, a time comes in the life of every man who reflects when instead of finding traces of God's presence in this world he is rather inclined to make a present of it to the Devil. What is to be said of a world in which horrors like those of the present war and the still greater horrors of the peace that prevailed

before the war and made it inevitable are possible? Yes, it is God's world but only in the same way as the grave-digger's scene in Hamlet is Shakespeare's work. We are forced to believe that it is largely supplemented by facts which make its defects explicable and that it is in the whole circle of reality of which our sphere of existence is a mere part that the Absolute Spirit is adequately embodied.

The conclusion, then, to which we come is that nature, in its last interpretation, is spirit. There is no spiritual world beyond this. What appears to be a universe of dead matter is in reality the living thought of a living God. But the material universe is not a coherent whole and, as such, cannot be a complete reality. We must, therefore, suppose that beyond it and including and supplementing it there are other worlds which together constitute a whole comprehensive enough to be coherent. The distinction, however, between this world and any other world beyond it is not a distinction of the natural and the spiritual. The spiritual is not a beyond; it is the universal principle which has its content in all that exists. The unseen universe is of a

piece with and a continuation of the visible universe and in both the One All-inclusive Spirit is revealed. Our world and every other possible world, as regions of mere fact are all equally secular and valueless. Their genuine reality and spirituality lies in their being the embodiment of the Absolute, of the True, the Good and the Beautiful.

Hegelianism and Immortality[1]

(*Modern Review, September, 1920*)

For enlightenment on one of the most important topics of philosophy, a topic which will never fail to be of paramount importance and absorbing interest to mankind, one turns in vain to the philosophy of Hegel. I refer to the problem of immortality, understanding by that term the continued existence of the finite self after death. Did Hegel accept this doctrine? It is by no means easy to answer the question. Nowhere in his writings is a systematic discussion of the doctrine of immortality to be found. All other subjects of fundamental interest to the student of philosophy are elaborately treated of but the problem of a future life is almost entirely ignored. It is true that there are a few passages in the *Philosophy of Religion* in which belief in immortality is expressed, but these passages are exceedingly ambiguous and cannot with

[1] A paper read before the Calcutta Philosophical Society.

certainty be taken to mean that the finite personality survives death. Stirling, than whom perhaps no one is a greater authority on Hegel, indeed tells us "that the whole tendency of the writings of Hegel supports belief in the immortality of the soul."[1] He refers to "the warm manner in which Hegel hails all such categories as the infinite and speaks of the melancholy of the thought of finitude," to "such expressions as that unreality death, the death of the body is the birth of the spirit" and concludes "that we have but to recollect all this to feel convinced of the perfect loyalty of Hegel to the hope of immortality." But the passages on which Stirling relies can hardly be said to support his conclusion. It is quite true that they express Hegel's fundamental conviction that spirit is the presupposition of all that is real and cannot, therefore, be conceived as not existing, but he seems to mean the universal spirit of which the world is the expression rather than the finite spirit of man. Take, for instance the following passage in the *Philosophy of Religion* which is perhaps typical, "The soul, the individual soul, has an infinite,

[1] *Schwegler's History of Philosophy*, p. 440.

an eternal quality, namely, that of being a citizen in the Kingdom of God. This is a quality and a life which is removed beyond time and the past; and since it is at the same time opposed to the present limited sphere, this eternal quality or determination eternally determines itself at the same time as a future. The infinite demand to see God, *i.e.*, to become conscious in spirit of His truth, as present truth, is in this temporal present not yet satisfied so far as consciousness in its character as ordinary consciousness is concerned."[1] Now, I think, it is hardly open to doubt that by the eternal quality of the individual soul in this passage, Hegel understands the spiritual life based on the consciousness of oneness with the Absolute and not the indefinite prolongation of the finite self. Man is immortal in so far as he is lifted above time through the religious consciousness of union with God and this immortal life is lived here and now and not in another world beyond the grave. "The immortality of the soul," we are told in another passage, "must not be represented as first entering the sphere of reality only at a later stage; it is the

[1] *Philosophy of Religion, English Tr.*, Vol. III, p. 105.

actual present quality of spirit; spirit is eternal, and for this reason is already present."[1] Universal spirit, that is to say, as the *prius* of all is incapable of perishing and if man is immortal it is because he has his being in it and has no meaning apart from it. This, however, does not necessarily mean that he, in his finite form, will survive death. What is imperishable in man is his essence and that essence is the Absolute spirit.

All this, however, throws no light on the problem of immortality as it is usually understood and Hegel resolutely refrains from helping his reader in solving it. The reason of this cannot be that he regards the question of immortality as not belonging to philosophy. Nor can it be said that it follows so obviously from his philosophical principles that it is unnecessary to deal expressly with it. The philosopher who devotes about a score of pages to the discussion of phrenology could, if he were so inclined, easily compose a few unambiguous sentences to let the world know what he thinks about the subject of immortality. Why then does he persistently

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 57.

evade the problem? One reason seems to be as Dr. McTaggart thinks, that Hegel is not much interested in the question. Man's being is consummated in the Absolute; in the Absolute he is eternal, and that being so, it is hardly worth while to inquire whether he, as a creature of time, will endure for ever. This appears to be his view. If in the midst of the finite we can become one with the infinite, eternal in every moment, why trouble about anything else?

But even if Hegel were disposed to pay attention to the doctrine of the survival of human personality, would he have found it easy to make it square with his general principles? Survival means, in some sense, the separation of the soul from the body and the continuance of the life of the released soul in an environment other than this, in some world different from the natural world in which we live at present. But, according to Hegel, there is no dualism of body and soul and the spiritual world is not another world somewhere beyond this, but this very world regarded as the expression of mind. "Only in appearance," he tells us, "is the natural separated from the divine and the body is only in

imperfect knowledge body and separated from the soul." The soul is the ideality of the body and is nothing apart from it. What ideally is the soul is, as a thing existing in space, body. "In so far as the 'I' lives the soul, which conceives, and, what is more, is free, is not separated from the body. The body is the outward embodiment of freedom and in it the 'I' is sensible. It is an irrational and sophistic doctrine which separates body and soul."[1] Body and soul, in short, are, in Hegel's view, not two different things but two sides of the same thing. The latter includes the former and contains it as a necessary element of itself. How, then, can the mind survive bodily death? Separation of mind from the body, it must never be forgotten, is absolutely meaningless from Hegel's point of view. Supposing that such separation has any meaning, what is to be the future home of the soul freed from the body at the moment of death? Again and again Hegel tells us that God is completely revealed in nature and that there is no supernatural world above and beyond this. He is most emphatic in rejecting the mediæval

[1] *Philosophy of Religion, Dyde's Tr.*, p. 54.

conception of the other world. The supersensible world is not another world but the sensible world itself adequately conceived. It is the present world regarded as the self-expression of reason. The everyday world which is here and now is the only world and in it God is fully revealed. The vain world beyond is only a phantasm of the abstract understanding. Consistently with this view it is impossible to suppose that the soul, after death, is transferred to another sphere. Future life would thus appear to be rendered impossible by the absence of any place where such life could be lived, unless we adopt the theory of reincarnation and say that after death the soul is born again into this very world. But the doctrine of reincarnation, besides other objections to which it is open, involves the assumption that the soul can be transferred from one body to another. This, we have seen, is an impossible conception for Hegel. Can it be that he was aware of these difficulties and the consciousness of them was one of the reasons which led him to shirk the problem of immortality ?

Dr. McTaggart thinks that Hegel is a believer in immortality. I am not quite so sure.

There is no doubt that he regards, as he must, the universal mind, independently of which nothing can exist, as immortal ; but, on the whole, the trend of his theory is, I am inclined to think, rather against the doctrine of the immortality of the finite self. In spite of his deep conviction that man is the son of God he somehow fails to appreciate sufficiently the value of human personality ; at any rate, to realise all that it implies.

Whether this view is correct or not, one must agree with Dr. McTaggart when he says that Hegel's failure to emphasise the immortality of the individual is a defect in his work. For as he truly remarks, "this is a question which no philosophy can be justified in treating as insignificant. A philosopher may answer it affirmatively, or negatively, or may deny his power of answering it at all. But, however he may deal with it, he is clearly wrong if he treats it as unimportant. For it does not only make all the difference for the future, but it makes a profound difference for the present** We can scarcely exaggerate the difference which will be made in our estimate of our place

in the universe and consequently, in our ideals, our aspirations, our hopes, the whole of the emotional colouring of our lives."[1]

But if Hegel has neglected the question of immortality, most of the distinguished thinkers who have been powerfully influenced by him and are described as Neo-Hegelians have taken cognisance of it and discussed it from various points of view. It will be instructive to consider how the topic has been handled by them.

T. H. Green, like Hegel, makes no direct reference to immortality, but it is distinctly pointed to by his theory of the moral ideal.[2] In man, according to Green, the eternally complete consciousness presupposed in the existence of nature is partially reproduced through an animal organism. This makes human nature a contradiction. As a limited expression of God man is finite, but as one with him, he is infinite. He, therefore, is driven to seek to solve this contradiction, to be in actuality what in possibility he *is*. Perfection of

[1] *Studies in Hegelian Cosmology*, p. 6.

[2] *Prolegomena to Ethics*, Book III, Chap. II.

his nature, the complete development of his capacities comes to be his ideal. This ideal is not an empty notion. Though in relation to the finite developing subject, it actually is not, still "if there were not a consciousness for which it existed, there would be no sense in saying that *in possibility it is*, for it would simply be nothing at all." It must exist not merely *for* but *in* or *as* a self-conscious subject. It is true that self-realisation is possible for man only as a member of an ethical community. Apart from the nation the individual is an unreal abstraction. But it is equally true that the nation exists in persons. In combating the falsehood that the nation is an aggregate of individuals, we must not fall into the equally serious mistake of supposing that the national life is realised anywhere except in the widened and deepened self-consciousness of the citizen. The general will is real only in so far as it is individualised in the will of the good man united with his fellowmen by the bond of social relations. Progress of Humanity, therefore, "can only mean progress *of* personal character *to* personal character." With personality

we begin and in personality we end. Realisation of human personality, which is possible only in society, "cannot be a mere process to infinity but must have its end as an eternal state of being and that no state of being could be such end in which the self-conscious personality presupposed by the process was either extinguished or treated as a mere means." "If, then, the progress of the race and of the individual is possible only on the basis of personality, if in the attainment of the end of human development personality is not extinguished but enriched, immortality, it would seem, must be regarded as a necessary postulate of the moral life. Green does not expressly draw this conclusion, but the tenour of his thinking justifies it. The emphasis he lays on personality distinguishes his system from that of Hegel and it is for this reason that, in spite of his silence on the subject, it is possible to regard his philosophy as favourable to belief in immortality.

Upon the significance and value of our moral personality Edward Caird also lays stress. The highest life of Humanity, he argues, is

realised not in spite of but because of the transitoriness, the weakness, the dangers and the failure of the natural life. What appear to be the evils of life are, very often, its opportunities of rising to a higher state of existence. "It is in meeting the risks and sufferings of a transitory life that the noblest features of character, courage, patience and the power of self-sacrifice are exercised and matured.[1] When the soldier sacrifices his life for his country, when the martyr prefers death to disloyalty to the cause with which he is identified, death is not a mere incident of the higher life but the very means through which it is realised. Can it be believed that the event which makes possible the realisation of the spiritual life in such cases is destructive to it? Our ultimate reason for believing anything of which we have no direct knowledge is that without it no rational interpretation of the experienced facts can be given. Is the supposition that the organs of the moral forces, by which, after all, the course of the world is shaped, perish at death consistent with the rationality of the universe? "I think that

[1] *Lay Sermons*, p. 269.

every one who has known intimately a great and good man feels death in his case to be almost incredible if by death be meant an end of being. If the world is a rational and therefore a moral system, it cannot be that this, the most precious thing we know, the only absolutely precious thing in the world, a character built up and matured in goodness through all the trials of life should pass away and be lost for ever."[1] If, then, we believe that the universe is a rational system in which God is self-revealed, future life would seem to follow as a necessary consequence. The world would be irrational and meaningless if what is highest in it perished with the dissolution of the body. "He who has lived for truth and goodness," Caird rightly concludes, "has built upon a rock that will not fail him *if* there be a God who governs and manifests Himself in the universe. He has become a part of the divine life and he and his work must remain.[2]

In his *Fundamental Ideas of Christianity* John Caird bases his argument for a future life

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 277.

[2] *Op. cit.*, p. 282.

on the inherent capabilities of our nature. Man is not a merely finite being, a creature of time destined to pass away. There is an element in him which distinguishes him from the lower animals and to which it is possible to apply the term 'eternal.' This is the element which raises him above the limits of time and space and makes him one with the spiritual principle presupposed in the existence of nature. In the finite things and events which constitute the world of experience an infinite mind is revealed and it is because we are a reproduction of this mind that it is possible for us to transcend our limitations and to be conscious of our finitude. The intelligence which is conscious of events in time cannot itself be in time. "When we think of our temporal existence we are lifted above it to a point of view that is not conditioned by its transiency, but yet in virtue of which we can pronounce it to be transitory." The conclusion to which such considerations point is that man's spiritual constitution is of such a nature that it is impossible to regard it as intended for the few years of his earthly existence. The only rational explanation of the

disproportion between our latent capacities and the functions we have to fulfil in this life is that there is a higher life where such capacities will find sufficient scope and employment. To think otherwise is to make human life vain and purposeless. "What strange irony of fate would there be in the cultivation and training of human intelligence, in the hived up fruits of long study and research, in the manifold struggles and self-denials by which a noble and beautiful nature is chastened and refined, if it is to disappear and drop out of existence just when it has become fitted for great and beneficent service in God's universe."[1] It is no answer to say that though the individual perishes the race survives and that the achievements of individuals contribute to and further the progress of mankind. Corporate immortality cannot be substituted for individual immortality. However true it may be that the good man is disinterested in his actions and lives an altruistic life, he can never be regarded as a mere means to an end, even if that end be the perfection of the human race. Personality is always an end in itself and it is after all in

[1] *Fundamental Ideas of Christianity*, Vol. II, p. 263.

the consciousness of the individual that Humanity is realised. [1]

But is not all this, it will naturally be asked, a mere expression of pious hope? What proof is there that it will be ever fulfilled? To this question there is only one reply. "If underneath all the phenomena of the world in which we live, we can discern no principle of reason and order, no absolute intelligence and love, then, indeed, our hope of immortality may be but an illusion and a dream, then, indeed, the world's course may be the thing of meaningless waste and reckless incongruity which such a supposition involves. But if there be a God, an infinite loving wisdom which has endowed us with the capacity of knowing, loving and communing with itself and which has made the order of the world a system of moral education preparing and disciplining us for a career of never-ending goodness and blessedness hereafter, can it be that all this vast moral system, with all the hopes and aspirations it encourages us to

[1] Humanity, to tell the truth, is not, at this moment, presenting a spectacle calculated to inspire men with the belief that to be merely the means to its perfection, of which there is no sign, is the be-all and end-all of life.

cherish, is but an elaborate and cruel deception ? Belief in immortality,[1] in short, ultimately rests on faith in God.

The philosophical principle on which Caird's case for immortality stands is employed by Lord Haldane for precisely the opposite purpose, in trying to show that any quest for immortality beyond the grave is essentially unmeaning.[2] The substance of his argument is that life is not a mere event or process in time. It involves a spiritual unity to which the temporal process is relative. Succession presupposes a principle which is not itself in succession, but transcends it and makes it possible. On one side, life is succession in time, on another side, it finds its full meaning in the unity of self-consciousness without which there would be no succession in time. Eternity, therefore, is not other than and beyond time but is realised in time. The truly immortal life is the eternal life which is being lived at this very moment. When these correlated sides of a concrete unity are, by an abstract understanding, separated from

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 296.

[2] *Pathway to Reality, Staye the Second*, Bk. IV, Chap. III.

each other, it is wrongly supposed that the present life is one of changes only and the eternal element is looked for beyond the grave. But "life now stands for us as intelligible only when contemplated from the standpoint of the eternal. Here and now is God, here and now is freedom, here and now is immortality." All this is very true, but it is hard to understand why this truth should be an insuperable obstacle to the inquiry whether the finite personality survives death or not. The fact that I am an eternal being to-day does not make the question unmeaning whether there are reasons to believe that I shall live tomorrow to complete the work I have taken in hand to-day. Why then, because I am beyond time, should it be unreasonable to ask whether death will put an end to me as a finite man bearing a proper name? On the contrary, it may be inferred that because we are what we are only upon a basis that is unaffected by change and decay, because we are one with the absolute mind, we are as little injured by death as the Absolute itself. Lord Haldane seems to take it for granted that the believer in immortality is bound to

separate the eternal element in man from what belongs to time and to connect the former with a transcendent world of immutable essences and the latter with the present sensible world, the two worlds being regarded as antithetical to each other. But surely it is possible to conceive of this world and the other world as essentially the same in kind and as the constituent members of a single whole in which the eternal mind is revealed and of man as a finite-infinite being belonging to this whole and, therefore, to both worlds.

W. Wallace points out that it is an ineradicable tendency of man to believe that the power behind nature in spite of appearances to the contrary, is on his side and that life is not extinguished by death.[1] It is not easy for him to think that death is the termination of his existence. Though this deep-rooted instinct is of great aid to us in the struggle for existence, it is wrong to suppose that it is a mere product of evolution. If, in order to avoid the paralysing thought that all is vanity, man said to himself 'let there be a life hereafter,' it is because there spoke in him

[1] *Lectures and Essays on Natural Theology and Ethics*, pp. 202-7.

"something other and yet not wholly other, than himself." But all that this irresistible belief really amounts to is that "our inner true being is not a visible and a sensible thing, that it is that in us which is unextinguished by death." We do not know anything more than this that "we are above and beyond time." This, to be sure, is giving a stone instead of bread. The conviction, simply, that we, as spiritual beings, transcend time can scarcely be of much use to us as a sustaining principle in the battle of life.

Professor Watson, like John Caird, regards immortality as a consequence of our essential nature.[1] Finite as he is, there is a principle in man which lifts him above his limitations and enables him to view all things from the standpoint of the whole. This distinctive power, due to his ideal nature, makes him one with God. The infinite wealth of the divine life is prospectively his and to take actual possession of it comes to be the inevitable aim of his life. There must therefore "be an eternal progress in knowledge, art and morality leading to an ever clearer

[1] *The Interpretation of Religious Experience*, Vol. II, pp. 313-17.

and fuller comprehension of God." The immense potentialities of our nature must be realised and "all eternity would seem to be required to give opportunity for progress in the knowledge of God and for approximation to his infinite perfection." It is scarcely possible to believe that a being who can transcend his finitude and be "a spectator of all time and of all existence" and who is continually making progress towards an ever-advancing ideal should perish without attaining the goal of his journey. "In struggle and conflict man has gradually attained to a measure of knowledge and morality and it does not seem credible that all this toil and pain and strife should be suddenly cut short for ever." If it is objected that such considerations merely point to the never-ceasing progress of the human race, the answer is that although moral progress is only possible through the co-operation and fellowship of men with each other, it ultimately involves the "conscious personal participation of all the members of society in its highest triumphs." If, therefore, it is legitimate to infer immortality from the unrealised possibilities of human nature, it must mean the

immortality of the individual and not merely of the race.

Mr. Bradley does not think that the immortality of the soul is very probable though he concedes that it is barely possible.[1] What exactly survival means and how far it must be personal is, in his view, not easy to determine. A soul may continue to exist without a body or "another nervous system sufficiently like our own might be developed." A future life is thus possible "even on the ground of common crude materialism." A thing is impossible absolutely only when it can be shown to be inconsistent with the nature of reality. This the continuance of the soul after death is not. But to say that survival is possible is one thing and to say that it is probable is another. It is idle to attempt to determine the chances of it where we have to deal largely with the unknown. If we judge by what little knowledge we possess, "a future life," Mr. Bradley declares, "is decidedly improbable." If it is urged that the hope of immortality is indestructible and that the deep-seated cravings of our nature must be satisfied,

[1] *Appearance and Reality*, pp. 501-10.

Mr. Bradley's answer is that it is irrational to demand that "every desire of every kind must, as such, be gratified." "What is there so sacred," he asks, "in this desire for a future life." Its attainment is not implied in the principles of our nature, nor is there anything particularly moral or religious in it. I, of course, desire to live a life of constant pleasure and no pain indefinitely prolonged, but this wish of mine is incapable of literal fulfilment consistently with my place in the world. All this, surely, is only a travesty of the position of the believer in immortality. The real point of his argument is that the unrealised possibilities of our nature go to indicate that this life is only the first stage of human existence and that somewhere else the career begun here will be continued and completed. There is such a disparity between the ideals and aspirations of man and the opportunities for their realisation in this life that unless we believe in a future of never-ending progress it becomes impossible to regard the universe as anything but fundamentally incoherent and irrational. "The sense of the incompleteness of our personal life,

if death is to terminate it," as Professor Ward truly says, "has grown with our moral and religious progress and is most keenly felt by the best of men and by men at their best."[1] "If without belief in immortality," declares Mr. Bradley, our religion and our morality will not work, so much the worse for our morality and our religion. The remedy lies in the correction of our mistaken and immoral notions about goodness." As a moral being I seek to attain goodness, but if as the consequence of my single-minded devotion to it and the faithful endeavour to realise it in my life, the conviction is forced upon me that there is a career of unlimited attainment in knowledge and goodness beyond the grave, my notion of goodness straightway becomes immoral! If it is argued that unless we survive death all our hard-won gains will be lost, Mr. Bradley has his answer ready. "Is a thing lost, in the first place, because *I* fail to get it or retain it? And, in the second place, what seems to us sheer waste is, to a very large extent, the way of the universe. We need not take on ourselves to be anxious about that."

[1] *The Realm of Ends*, p. 387.

But what is lost, if death ends all, is not any mere *thing* but the *moral personality.* The question is not whether *I* am to retain certain things which I have acquired but whether the universe is to retain what is of infinite value, *viz.*, the moral individual. As for sheer waste being the way of the universe, it is just this that furnishes a hard problem to philosophy. That it is an appearance is not to be doubted but does it not get itself supplemented and explained in reality? If we could help being anxious about that and be indifferent to the tragedies of life, the problem of job would never have been raised and it would never have troubled mankind.

With endless progress, Mr. Bradley urges, perfection is unattainable. Precisely so, if progress meant only an infinite process not relative to an end. But, as Green has pointed out, it presupposes a goal and that goal is a completely developed personality. We speak of it as endless because our consciousness is subject to the condition of time; but there is no reason to think that time is not superseded without being annulled in a higher form of consciousness of which

we, at present, have no knowledge. Perfection, Mr. Bradley insists, is not something to be attained. "As a function of the perfect universe you are already perfect." The trouble arises from finitude. "If you are to be perfect then you, as such must be resolved and cease." But here I am and do not mean to cease, at least for a time. That being so, why may I not try to bring the perfection I already have in the Absolute over to my side? Instead of my being engulfed in the Absolute why should not the Absolute be progressively revealed in me? To the argument that pain and sorrow should be somewhere made good, Mr. Bradley's reply is that all is not wrong if individuals suffer. "The universe in its attitude towards finite beings must be judged of not piecemeal but as a system." True, but the universe is a system of individuals and the perfection of the whole to which the hardships and failures of life in the temporal order contribute must ultimately be shared by and expressed in the consciousness of individuals.

The main reason of Mr. Bradley's hostility to the doctrine of immortality appears to be the

difficulty of harmonising it with "the general results of this book," *viz.*, *Appearance and Reality*. The final destiny and last truth of things is not to be maintained and respected in the Absolute. There they must undergo wholesale rearrangement. "We have an all-pervasive transfusion with a reblending of all material." From such a point of view, so far from the idea of a future life being deserving of encouragement, even the existence of finite selves for a few years on this planet would appear to be a scandal. But is there not a more excellent way of avoiding the awkward situation, *viz.*, to re-examine the first principles of a philosophy whose insufficiency is proved by its confession of inability to justify the hope of immortality?

Dr. Bosanquet's view of immortality has affinity with Mr. Bradley's.[1] He discusses at considerable length the question of the unequal distribution of pleasure and pain, good and evil, to which Mr. Bradley also refers, and asks whether the demand is justified that the inequalities of this present life shall be redressed in another. The conclusion reached is that

[1] *The Value and Destiny of the Individual*, Lecture IX.

such demands arise from a total misconception of the nature of the world we live in. Finite beings are not independent and only externally related to each other. They are members one of another and have their unity in the Absolute. Claims, therefore, all vanish and the "best people have most to bear and carry the burdens of the rest." But is it possible to regard this as a finally satisfying arrangement? The good man, of course, does not complain and bears the burden as cheerfully as he can, but the impartial observer instinctively feels that this is a profound anomaly which requires to be explained. No amount of abstract reasoning will ever shake the fundamental conviction of the human mind, cherished alike by widely differing races of men, that the undeserved sufferings of the virtuous and the triumphs of the unrighteous plainly indicate that this life is not all and that elsewhere things are righted and readjusted. The extent and magnitude of the evils of life would be fatal to the rationality of the universe unless we believe that their purpose is fulfilled in a better world for which life here is a preparation. It is no doubt

true, as Dr. Bosanquet shows, that pleasure and pain arise from the finite-infinite nature of man and are, consequently, unavoidable. But is the frightful amount of pain and misery to be found in the world to be explained in this way? Is *so much* of suffering the result of our dual nature only? If good and evil, though common, must be unequally shared, why should not their distribution be on more equitable principles? It is all very well to say that sufferings are opportunities of soul-making. They are as often soul-destroying. How much consolation, one wonders, would Dr. Bosanquet's philosophy afford to the inhabitants of ravaged Belgium and stricken France! So long as we understand that the root of our pleasure and pain is in our own nature, "we cannot," argues Dr. Bosanquet, "pick and choose among the hazards and hardships which empirically confront us. We cannot say that so much of evil would be very well, but this which we find is more than we can put up with." Is it possible for any one overwhelmed by the misfortunes of life to be so heroic as this unless he is supported by the conviction of better things to come? "The

sense of misery unrelieved," as Mr. Balfour forcibly puts it, "of wrongs unredressed, of griefs beyond remedy, of failures without hope, of physical pain so acute that it seems the one overmastering reality in a world of shadows, of mental depression so deadly that it welcomes physical pain itself as a relief—these and all the crookednesses and injustices of a crooked and unjust world, may well overload our spirits and shatter the springs of our energies, if to this world only we must restrict our gaze."[1]

It is not possible to deal here, with all the important points which Dr. Bosanquet has raised in his discussion of the destiny of the finite self. His view is the outcome of the theory in which he argues with Mr. Bradley, that all limited modes of being, all finite individuals are transformed and absorbed in the Absolute. Persons, like everything else, are rooted in the Absolute, are elements, not members as Dr. Bosanquet tells us, of the Absolute, but the all-inclusive reality in comprehending them transmutes and rearranges

[1] *Essays and Addresses*, p. 291.

them. Nothing, from the ultimate point of view, remains as it appears to our limited comprehension. The separateness and mutual exclusiveness of the finite selves is due not to their strength but to their impotence. It arises from the separation of a limited portion of the total content of reality from its context. To realise our personality is "to absorb ourselves in our exclusiveness." Perfection or completion of our being, therefore, is incompatible with the continuance of the exclusive self. It implies that "we should include much more material and lose something of our exclusiveness." But why should the extension of the area of our being mean the weakening of the link with our past self or the dissipation of personality? The ever-widening circle of the contents of the growing self must surely continue to be centred in the unity of the self-same consciousness. A little child develops into a great philosopher but the latter does not lose the consciousness of his identity with or become more impersonal than the former. As the same content can belong to different selves like the common base of several triangles their increasing perfection

means not their exclusion from but rather, intimacy with each other. Dr. Bosanquet all along lays stress upon the contents of the self and seems to forget that the *form* of them, *viz.*, self-consciousness is not less essential. Whether the finite personality survives death or not, "what is certainly preserved," he argues, "is the content of the self, which is secure in the Absolute." But if the principle of the conservation of values has any meaning, it cannot be that the thing of highest value, the *personality* of man, is not conserved. Dr. Bosanquet contends that what is essential "is not primarily that the goal of development should be *our* personality but that it shall be *a* personality." What came from God is for ever continued in God. But God is not of the dead but of the living. The father, needs the son quite as much as the son the father, and in the Absolute spirit they in and through their difference are one. The truth is that Dr. Bosanquet's conception of the Absolute requires to be amended. Things are not blended with each other and merged in the Absolute. It is rather the Absolute that is differentiated into things in each of which it is realised as a self,

whole and undivided.[1] Ultimate reality, that is to say, is not a single unitary self, but a system of selves objectively expressed in a system of interrelated things. From this point of view, selves are not mere elements of but members of the Absolute.

A conception similar to this is put forward by Royce in his well known Gifford lectures and on it he founds his argument for immortality.[2] He conceives of the Absolute as a unity of selves, each of which is infinite of its own kind. They like the monads of Leibnitz, represent the whole world from their own individual and unique points of view. The content of experience of all of them is the same; it is the form and mode of experiencing that varies. These selves, infinite but partial, are interdependent on one another through their common relation to God and are unified in God because of their distinction from and relation to one another. Each one of them requires the others as its supplement and its life with them is an eternally

[1] I have tried to sketch this view in an article entitled "The Absolute and the Finite Self," in the *Philosophical Review* (July, 1918).

[2] *The World and the Individual*, Vol. II, Lecture X.

fulfilled social life in which "God, the individual of individuals, who dwells in all as they in him" is self-expressed. The constituent members of the "self-conscious organism of the Absolute," the finite but perfect individuals, are infinite in number "since the Absolute must possess an infinite wealth of self-representation." Human selves are fragmentary expressions of these eternal selves. God is the unified system of the transcendental selves of men and other selves like them and in him they, through their very union, retain their relative distinction from each other. "In God, every individual self, however insignificant its temporal endurance may seem, eternally possesses a form of consciousness that is wholly other than this our present flickering form of mortal consciousness. . . . Our life, as hid from us now, in the life of God, has another form of consciousness than the one which we now possess." The mortal beings that we now are, are really conscious selves only in God and death, from the philosophical point of view, is only "an incident in the life of a larger individual continuous in meaning with the individuality that death cuts short."

The included self disappears from view at death but it "implies an including self-hood continuous in meaning with the first." The moral tasks of man are never finished. By serving God fresh opportunities of service are created. "The service of the eternal is an essentially endless service. There can be no last moral deed." What is here begun must therefore, be continued in another form of existence. Our present truncated self is developed into some thing of which we, at present, have no conception and continued in God, but "despite God's absolute unity we, as individuals, preserve and attain our unique lives and meanings and are not lost in the very life that sustains us, and that needs us as its own expression."

At least two writers influenced by Hegel have taken the doctrine of reincarnation into serious consideration. Dr. McTaggart discusses it at some length in his *Studies in Hegelian Cosmology* and *Some Dogmas of Religion* and Professor Mackenzie is willing to admit that there is something to be said in favour of it.[1] I have not space to deal sufficiently with the

[1] *Elements of Constructive Philosophy*, pp. 321-23, 449.

arguments which Dr. McTaggart has advanced in support of the doctrine and must be content with observing that if it be true it can in no sense take the place of belief in continued existence in another world as a postulate of the moral life. I can see no difference whatever between extinction at death and reincarnation. Immortality has no meaning unless the surviving personality retains the memory of this life and the consciousness of identity. This does not, of course, mean that every event of past life must be remembered. All that is required is that the bond of conscious connection with the past is not broken. I may forget almost all the incidents of my childhood but nevertheless I know that I am the same person to-day that I was in the early years of my life. What have I to do with the gentleman, if a gentleman at all, that I was in my previous incarnation? Indeed I feel that I am much nearer to my fellow beings around me than to that personality. It is useless to say that he and I are the same substance. We have something of infinitely higher value than this identity of substance between the successive incarnations of the same

individual. In the Absolute, here and now, we are all one. No practical problem of life is solved by the theory of reincarnation It is supposed to account for the inequalities of this life. But present inequality cannot arise out of past equality. There must have been inequalities in the past at whatever point of time you begin. And if it takes all sorts of things to make a world, inequality in some shape or other there must always be. The doctrine of rebirth, Professor Mackenzie tells us, "has undoubtedly a certain fascination." I do not know what the general feeling about the matter may be, but, speaking for myself, I can say that nothing is more shocking to me than the idea of coming back to this world again. If the Almighty gave me a choice between extinction and reincarnation, I should without a moment's hesitation choose the former. The only thing attractive in the doctrine is that there is an element of humour in it. Just think of the mighty effort which Hegel reborn, unless killed in the war, is making at this moment, as an undergraduate of some university, to understand the meaning of what he wrote a century ago!

Among the writers whose views we have considered, Mr. Bradley alone, curiously enough, says anything helpful as to how, assuming that survival is a fact, another life and another world may be conceived.[1] He, of course, only suggests possibilities and is far from holding that what is supposable is real or even probable. We have seen that to maintain with Hegel that God is fully revealed in this world is to render life after death inconceivable. There must be surroundings in the midst of which such life can be lived. The ordinary idea on the subject is that the soul after death continues to exist in God in a purely spiritual world. For such a view the opposition between the natural world and the spiritual world is fundamental. A dualism of this sort, however, is shown by Hegel to be wholly untenable. Spirit not unfolded into a world of facts is a false abstraction just as a world of facts not centred in and experienced by mind is unreal. The one idea against which Hegel inveighs at every turn is that of a transcendent God. But because God is not somewhere beyond the world in which we live, it does

[1] *Essays on Truth and Reality*, Chap. XVI.

not follow that he is completely manifested in it. The sensible world, the world we call real, may be a part only of a wider reality. As Mr. Bradley suggests, "what we call our real environment may be the merest fraction of the universe." It is "the universe of those things which are continuous in space with my body and in time with the states and the actions of that body." As such, it is the outcome of an ideal construction we make for the practical purposes of life. Though it is the only place where at present it is possible for us to live and work, it "may, for anything we know, be one of the least pieces of reality and there may be an indefinite number of other real worlds superior to our own." All these worlds, however, must be viewed as comprised within a single system of reality and it is in this inclusive system alone that God can be regarded as fully revealed.

Relative with the invisible world and functioning in it, there may be an invisible body pervading and supporting the perishable physical organism and death may mean nothing more than the separation of this body from its material adjunct. As its ideal counterpart, the surviving

soul may continue its career in the environment supplied by the encompassing unseen world.

The world beyond, however, is not purely spiritual any more than this world is purely material. Spirit has its content in facts of experience and any world, in order to be a world at all, must consist of facts experienced by mind. The real is also ideal and ideality is nowhere except in the real world. A world of pure ideas, eternal essences, bodiless minds is a figment of the imagination, an abstraction as false as the materialist's universe of mindless stuff. You cannot sever from each other the mutually complementary elements of a concrete whole and place one on this side of the grave and the other beyond it. This world, as an experienced world, is for mind and as such is spiritual, just as the other world consisting of facts which can be real only as known must be an objective world and, therefore, in essence, of the same kind as the world in which we exist at present. We are too ready to assume that what lies beyond the ken of our senses at present is, as such, spiritual, forgetting that to beings differently situated and possessing senses of another sort, it may appear

to be as 'material' as the things around us. There is nothing which is not both physical and spiritual from different points of view. To form an unduly low estimate of our present abode and to sigh for a realm of purely spiritual entities is the outcome of want of reflection and false philosophy. If your spiritual world is not here, it is nowhere, and any sphere into which you may be introduced after death is bound to be surprisingly analogous to this. The only difference which may be expected is that there our hopes and aspirations will be better fulfilled and the conditions of higher life will be more favourable than on this planet. But everywhere the real world must be of the same stuff, unspiritual if you view it superficially and spiritual if you take it at its maximum. Ultimate reality is only one and that reality is the Absolute mind embodied in a universe of which the visible and the invisible worlds are mutually complementary elements.